

Articles and Sermons :: Praying for persecution

Praying for persecution - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2014/5/3 23:10

Since it is generally known that the church thrives amid persecution, we could pray for it so the American church could thrive, but the percentage that would be likely to be low unless that persecution brings with it an economic collapse times worse than the Great Depression and an EMP event. That would silence the machines and limit the distractions. Then, maybe, we could hear God well enough that He could stoke a hunger for His Word and for communion with Him in prayer that is stronger than we've ever known.

While it is unlikely most of us would pray sincerely for persecution, God is leading the persecuted church to see our need and pray on our behalf.

The following, from China, was posted in October 2005:

How should American Christians pray for the church in China? So asked the reporter from the Baptist mission board, ending his interview with a leader of the Chinese house-church movement.

His subject answered, "Stop praying for persecution in China to end." He added, "It is through persecution that the church has grown."

The leader of the underground church then added something else: "We, in fact, are praying that the American church might taste the same persecution so revival would come to the American church like we have seen in China."

And more recently, in November 2012, from North Korea:

In a media release, Reverend Eric Foley, CEO of Seoul USA, says he was surprised when he first asked members of the North Korean underground church how Americans could pray for them.

"They answered, 'You pray for us? We pray for you!' When I asked why, they responded, 'Because Western Christians often put so much faith in their prosperity and political freedoms that they don't know what it's like to have to depend completely on God. And because of that, they often do not get to know him in all the ways he invites us to.'"

Of course, we still should pray for the persecuted church. We can also join in the prayers offered up by the persecuted church for the church in America if we dare.

from: <http://www.dothenet.net/content/persprosp.php>

Re: Praying for persecution - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2014/5/3 23:37

G D
 There are Christians in Russia, they meet underground.

C G
 In China, they're killed when they're found.

G D
 And in Cuba the Christians live up in the hills

C G
 Because it's not safe in the town.

C G
 And to think it might happen right here in America,

D G
 I know you think it's not true.

C G

But it's happening to Christians right here in America,
D G
Wait till it happens to you.

from: <http://www.onlyvisiting.com/gallery/guitar/america.html>

Re: Praying for persecution - posted by proudpapa, on: 2014/5/4 1:18

John 15 :

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

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.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

I am not so sure that the Bible teaches us to pray for persecution but I must admit that the Bible seems to clearly teach that persecution is part of the normal Christian life.

Thankyou for preparing us for the normal Christian life.

Re: Praying for persecution - posted by narrowpath, on: 2014/5/4 13:17

I understand the dynamics of persecution producing more godliness in the saints, but nowhere in the bible are we asked to pray the Lord to have us persecuted. On the contrary:

1 Timothy 2

2 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

We must learn to take the opportunities we have while we are still relatively free in our religious expression. It is our obligation to contribute to the common good of all people. Asking for persecution is as if a son asks his father to discipline him. No-no, it is much better to do what we are supposed to do than to misbehave and accept discipline.

1 Peter 2:20

For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.

Saints in countries that persecuted Christians are under push forces. We here in the West are under pull forces. The same satanic force, just a different application. Perhaps it takes more resolve to prosper spiritually under freedom than under persecution.

We must learn to grasp the opportunities given to us now, regardless if we are persecuted or in liberty.

Re: Praying for persecution - posted by narrowpath, on: 2014/5/4 13:17

deleted double submission

Re: Praying for persecution - posted by yuehan, on: 2014/5/4 20:00

Echoing narrowpath's comments, KingJimmy had discussed why praying for persecution is unbiblical in an earlier thread :

http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?mode=viewtopic&topic_id=51595&forum=35&start=0&viewmode=flat&order=0

When discussing persecution, I believe it is dangerous to focus on persecution in itself without focusing on Christ. It would only breed fear, without offering any notion of divine strength or hope.

The truth is that unless one fixes their mind on Christ, it would be very difficult to overcome adversity (be it nationwide persecution or other forms of individual suffering). Indeed, in John 16:33 - Christ reminds us that in spite of our troubles, He has overcome the world. He's telling us to look up, to look to Him!

The best way to prepare someone for the prospect of future persecution is thus to encourage them to focus not on their circumstances, but on Christ Himself - who is the source of all joy, hope and strength.

The wonderful thing is that we can learn to trust Christ and His love for us whatever situation we find ourselves in. It doesn't take persecution to bring that about, and is in fact the normal Christian life.

Re: - posted by KPYee, on: 2014/5/4 20:51

The Bible asked us to rejoice in trials and tribulations for the reason that it will purge and refine us to be a more suitable vessel for his cause . Persecution is certainly a form of trial and tribulation . So praying for it isn't unfounded on the Bible . Paul said "My strength is made perfect in weakness" Anything that will bond us more closely to Christ should be welcomed by the Christians. Especially so when we consider it will have the effect of rousing nonchalant saints to become passionate for Him . Persecution if it happens will save many currently lackadaisical souls from hell . So is it wrong to pray for it..?

Nevertheless I think it's not necessary to pray for it . Persecution will arise on its own when enough Christians are lukewarm. If we don't overcome sin, sin and its agents will overpower us. Persecution then becomes inevitable

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Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2014/5/4 22:24

Why not just leave it to God to decide the means by which He chooses to purify His vessels?

When religious persecution is spoken of as *needed* for the purifying of the believer and the church at large, I cannot help but wonder if these ideas for spiritual growth belong to man rather than to God (I'm not aware of any biblical backing for such views). If one truly believes that, he is certainly invited to board the next flight to North Korea or Saudi Arabia.

Praying for persecution is similar to praying specifically for personal trials, poverty, and cancer so that we could draw nearer to Christ. I have prayed that I would know Christ more and that He become my only desire, but I don't pray for Him to use specific means to accomplish those ends.

God's ways and not our ways, His thoughts are not our thoughts (Isaiah 55). We do not need to instruct Him as to how He should exercise His sovereignty. God knows best and is in full control of our circumstances, and I am content in that.

Re: - posted by Lordoitagain (), on: 2014/5/4 22:44

An interesting thing to inject in this discussion is the fact that Jesus prayed: "Father if it be possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will but thine be done." when he was about to face the worst for us.

If we sincerely pray: "Thy will be done" ... we are praying most appropriately. If in His omniscience He deems persecution as the most glorifying to Him ... may His perfect will be done. If He determines otherwise ... His will be done.

Re: Praying for persecution - posted by dolfan (), on: 2014/5/5 8:08

I could be wrong but when I read the initial post I sensed a tongue in cheek to the suggestion of praying for persecution. But, it caused me to keep reading, and the point is well taken.

Persecuted people sometimes view us as lacking and pray for us instead of asking for our prayers. Some of them see what we are too blinded by pride, affluence and cares of this life to see. And, because of this blindness, we are the real darkness and not they in the lands of their persecutors.

I think the opening paragraph is an honest effort to be ironic and not an actual urging to pray for persecution. At least that is how I understood it.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2014/5/5 8:45

While I gladly accept persecution when it comes, and believe God can do great things through a persecuted church, persecution is not something we should actively pray for and seek. Indeed, Jesus said that though we would be persecuted, when we are, we are to flee to the next city. In other words, don't seek to stay around and be persecuted some more.

We pray thy kingdom come, thy will be done.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2014/5/5 9:16

As it is, honestly, how do we in fact know that persecuted Christians in China are walking close with the Lord? Such notions smack of misty-eyed romanticism instead of reality. It might make for a good Ravenhill sermon, but it is frankly just bad theology.

Case in point, look at some such as Witness Lee and his movement. If anything they prove that some in China are damnable heretics, and persecution has done little to redeem them. In China you find every problem the church in America has... except maybe bad PowerPoint slides.

They are no better off than us. They are just as blessed as us.

I dare say Christians in China are no more blessed or better off than us in the West. My level of blessing doesn't have much to do with my geography or whether or not somebody has a knife to my throat. I am blessed to the degree I have been made to sit in heavenly places with Christ, and have been blessed with every spiritual blessing. I have been granted by his grace, everything pertaining to life and godliness.

edited

Re: - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2014/5/5 10:56

I agree with Narrow Path and Savanna. We pray for those in authority so that we would live quite and peaceable lives.

We don't need to pray for persecution because it comes with the territory. "All those that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2Timothy 3:12).

"If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also." (John 15:20)

We pray that the Church would be purified and The Lord will send the refining fire that will get the job done. Judgement begins first in the house of God.

Mike

Re: Jimmy, on: 2014/5/5 14:03

And Jimmy how do you know that those in persecuted lands are NOT walking close to the Lord? It has been said that one hour spent in the presence of someone who has suffered for Christ in a persecuted nation will expose shallowness of our Western faith.

I think your assessment of the persecuted church is a bit simplistic I might add brother a little unrealistic.

Blaine

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2014/5/5 14:16

Hi Bear---

I think part of the problem at least for me is the perception that if we are not being persecuted or threatened on a daily basis that we should feel guilty about it. I am sorry about the persecution in Iraq and China but praise God I am not living there. If what you all are saying about persecution is correct then we will be experiencing it here soon enough.

In other words it is not my fault that we in the states are not persecuted like those elsewhere. That is Gods call, not mine. Yes we should be praying for them of course and we need to be ready. But we don't need to feel condemned because we are fortunate enough to be relatively free from persecution here.

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2014/5/5 15:10

We can make persecution an idol in a weird way.

The saints of the NT church exalted Jesus, not persecution. In fact, Paul gives a lot of "buts" in 2 Cor. 4 to describe how persecuted but not forsaken/abandoned they were. Of course, the persecuted church, real as it is, is not to blame for a ny romanticizing of it we Americans may do. But, we do glam it up in our minds.

Lord help us to endure our own self inflicted illusions and to see Your light. We dishonor You and Yours when we imagine vainly that the persecuted are somehow immune to temptation, reach super-spiritual status, or are closer to You because of persecution. At the same time, I thank You Lord that You have given them gold purified by fire, that they have in some measure we don't know overcome sin due to suffering in their bodies, that they do not reject You, and that You are glorified by them. I pray that they will endure to the end in faithfulness and truth. I pray that you will wake us from our slumber and revive us still. Cleanse and purify us, O Lord.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2014/5/5 15:16

Amen!!

Re: - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2014/5/5 15:52

Persecution for born again believers come because of the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2014/5/5 16:04

I believe it is wise and biblical to seek to be prepared for persecution. That's why I loved reading the Principles book. I believe it is good to pray for our hearts to be prepared for persecution be it mild or severe, that we may not deny His name when that time comes.

I also believe it is our duty to pray for the persecuted church around the world.

However, I do not believe it is wise nor biblical to pray for persecution or to focus that much attention on it, or to elevate the persecuted church above all other churches or Christians.

As has been stated on this thread, The Bible makes it clear that persecution is inevitable if we seek to truly live a godly life in Christ Jesus. I think a good prayer in light of that truth would be, "Lord, help me to live godly in Christ Jesus, and to prepare for inevitable persecution that comes with that."

A passage of Scripture that came to mind is 1Cor.7:17-24

"But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches. 18 Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised. 19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters. 20 Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. 21 Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. 22 For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave. 23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. 24 Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called."

Verses 21 and 24 especially stand out to me here. God tells us in verse 21 that we are to take advantage of any opportunity we have to be outwardly free, so in light of that it wouldn't make sense to pray for persecution.

I'll post Matthew Henry's take on those two verses since I think he does a good job at breaking them down:

Verse 21

"Now," says the apostle, "art thou called being a servant? Care not for it. Be not over-solicitous about it. It is not inconsistent with thy duty, profession, or hopes, as a Christian. Yet, if thou mayest be made free, use it rather," v. 21. There are many conveniences in a state of freedom above that of servitude: a man has more power over himself, and more command of his time, and is not under the control of another lord; and therefore liberty is the more eligible state. But men's outward condition does neither hinder nor promote their acceptance with God. For he that is called being a servant is the Lord's freed-man—apeleutheros, as he that is called being free is the Lord's servant. Though he be not discharged from his master's service, he is freed from the dominion and vassalage of sin. Though he be not enslaved to Christ, yet he is bound to yield himself up wholly to his pleasure and service; and yet that service is perfect freedom. Note, Our comfort and happiness depend on what we are to Christ, not what we are in the world. The goodness of our outward condition does not discharge us from the duties of Christianity, nor the badness of it debar us from Christian privileges. He who is a slave may yet be a Christian freeman; he who is a freeman may yet be Christ's servant. He is bought with a price, and should not therefore be the servant of man.

Verse 24

"He sums up his advice: Let every man wherein he is called abide therein with God, v. 24. This is to be understood of the state wherein a man is converted to Christianity. No man should make his faith or religion an argument to break through any natural or civil obligations. He should quietly and comfortably abide in the condition in which he is; and this he may well do, when he may abide therein with God. Note, The special presence and favour of God are not limited to any outward condition or performance. He may enjoy it who is circumcised; and so may he who is uncircumcised. He who is bound may have it as well as he who is free. In this respect there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free, Col. 3:11. The favour of God is not bound."

Re: , on: 2014/5/5 16:47

Oracio writes.....

"However, I do not believe it is wise nor biblical to pray for persecution or to focus that much attention on it, or to elevate the persecuted church above all other churches or Christians."

I could not agree more. Men who follow other men do this, those who are focused on Jesus are the prepared ones.....
..bro Frank

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2014/5/5 17:25

"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."

"Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."

"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs— heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

"And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved."

"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake."

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be those of his own household. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it."

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2014/5/5 17:28

Quote:
-----"However, I do not believe it is wise nor biblical to pray for persecution or to focus that much attention on it, or to elevate the persecuted church above all other churches or Christians."

There is only One Church. But I believe the only reason some brethren esteem some countries where there is a better testimony of the Church under persecution is that, there is a better testimony. Another way to look at praying for persecution is simply praying for Christians to be salt and light and be bold witnesses, such always brings opposition and persecution. The reason we do not have persecution in the West is that there is "little" to persecute.

Growing true Christianity is opposed, stagnant (lukewarm) Christianity is tolerable by the world.

Revelation 3 (New International Version)

15 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! 16 So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. 17

So I do see it Biblical and right to desire the Church to grow, be a witness (Acts 1:8). Though there are times of peace given to the Church and the world will admire the testimony at times of the true Church, mostly there will be persecution, mis-understanding and a opposed spirit against the true testimony of the Church.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2014/5/5 17:48

In the book of Acts we see a certain pattern which I believe would be good for us to model in these last days. We see that the bold preaching of the gospel brought severe persecution to the early church. They did not pray for persecution. They prayed for boldness to preach the Word and God answered that prayer and filled them with the Holy Ghost and they spoke the Word of God boldly—Acts 4:30-31. Persecution was a by-product of the bold preaching of the gospel.

Just like the early church, we should pray for the Lord to fill us with the Holy Spirit and to grant us boldness to unashamedly preach the gospel as a lifestyle. That kind of bold proclamation of God's Word will inevitably bring persecution our way, trust me.

The reason we're not seeing much persecution in the West is because we're not seeing much bold gospel-proclamation by the Body of Christ.

The moment you and I start taking a stand and proactively seek to share our faith verbally with the lost, get ready! Satan will come in full force and seek to attack you in various ways including physical persecution at times.

As has been pointed out, the focus needs to be on Jesus Christ, and on bringing Him the most glory by doing what He has called us to do.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2014/5/5 17:50

Amen brother Greg as soon as I posted my post I saw yours.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2014/5/5 18:03

There are a lot of holy brothers and sisters in this country. I have known many who love the Lord with all their heart. I would dare say most of us are among those, and have all known a small measure of momentary light affliction and persecution as a result.

I don't think it is right for you brother Greg, to slight the church as you have, simply because you don't think we aren't persecuted hard enough. Consider in your damning remarks that the church isn't the only religion actively persecuted in China. Other religions are too.

So, before you falsely exalt our Chinese brethren to a level of spirituality that we have not somehow obtained in the Americas, please consider people of other religions, and even false prophets themselves, are persecuted in China along with the church. Are these people more spiritual than us too?

Or consider the great saints in this nation who have come before us. Tozer and others lived very comfortable lifestyles with little to no persecution. They endured some social stigmas from time to time. But to my knowledge his life was never in peril. Was Tozer compromised? Or what of Ravenhill? No gang banger ever shot him while wandering around the ghettos of New York at night. Same with Wilkerson.

Consider that at the moment we are simply experiencing a measure of grace in which, like our Lord did at times, we are having great favor with men because of the measure of grace given to us at this present time. Things won't always be this way. Great darkness is coming, and soon. The early church experienced the same at times in Acts and elsewhere. It is not a strange thing to see in the Bible and church history.

But if you think God is going to start allowing people to cut our heads off to make us more spiritual and saintly, I think you are mistaken. Saints rejoice in persecution. Some even fall away. Things get glorious, but they also get messy.

God will cause us to grow because of grace, and the inward work of the Spirit. This happens in good times and bad.

Let us not blaspheme the blood of the martyrs. They pursued peace with all men. They do not pray or invite persecution on themselves. When they had opportunity, like the Puritans, they fled, just as our Lord instructed.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2014/5/5 18:04

Quote:
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As has been pointed out, the focus needs to be on Jesus Christ, and on bringing Him the most glory by doing what He has called us to do

Amen brother, well said. Yes let us keep our example from the Book of Acts and try and stay there. So your emphasis is right to pray for boldness.

Re: There is no glamor, on: 2014/5/5 20:10

If you read the reports I read you will see there is nothing glamorous about the persecuted church. Only saints who are trying to live out the reality of Jesus Christ in heart wrenching situations. These precious saints need our prayers.

Blaine Scogin

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2014/5/5 21:24

I do also believe it is good for us to be aware of the hardships of our persecuted brothers and sisters, for a number of reasons. For one, it is good so that we can better know how to pray for them. Also, the Lord uses their testimonies to stir us up unto good works and to help us see what is most important, which is our relationship with God and one another.

In all these things we must keep a proper balance or we will go to unhealthy and unbiblical extremes that will hinder rather than help us in our walk.

We are all growing in His grace and knowledge and I am thankful that the Lord is patient with me in all my misunderstandings. I am thankful that we do not have to have it all figured out to be His blood-bought children.

Re: Praying for persecution - posted by InLove, on: 2014/5/5 22:17

I personally don't think persecution will raise the level of the church in America, but will send the fake back to the world. Be careful for the Christians you are casting down in America. I believe the ones that would last through persecution when it comes are the ones who are doing everything they can now with the freedom they have.

The fact is we need revival. The masses need to be saved. The countries were falling apart when God used men like John Wesley, Jonathon Edwards and others to bring revival. I believe God is still leading and guiding. I see hope, not fear.

In Love,
Joe

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2014/5/6 10:56

Praying to be persecuted is a thought nowhere found in Scripture.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2014/5/6 11:26

Meanwhile, there's 1 Tim 2:1-4:

"Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2014/5/6 11:34

It sure is a shame that God does not get what he desires.

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2014/5/6 11:51

TMK,

You asked us to keep you accountable. So I am.

"It sure is a shame that God does not get what he desires."

We both know what you mean by that.

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2014/5/6 14:16

I want to sort of lay out a foundation for what I am going to say and then present some alternative ideas to what is floating around in this thread.

I posted the scripture early that said that all those who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. That's what the Bible says and it doesn't put any ifs, ands, or buts on the end of that. It is what it is. Jesus also said that we should expect to be persecuted, "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

Also, if you look at acts, you can clearly see that Peter and John rejoiced because they were counted worthy to suffer for

His name.

So I want to employ a little logic here: Jesus said that we are blessed if we suffer persecution for His name. He also said that we are blessed if the other things in Matthew 5 were true about us.

Should I pray that the Lord would make me more poor in spirit? What about meekness? Should I pray for that? What about being a peacemaker or mourning? What about hungering and thirsting for righteousness or all the rest? Should I say, "Nowhere in the Bible does it say to pray for those things." A part of praying in Jesus' name is saying to the Father, "Jesus Himself said and desires this." By our sufferings we are made more like Him. Go read 1 Peter 1:3-9 and see that

We ought to pray that everything, including persecution, that Jesus said should happen to us would be fulfilled in our lives! The tragedy is when we pray for something, yet do nothing that would warrant such a change. If you pray that God makes you a peacemaker, but you make war with other people, do you think that God will have a successful time in transforming you, especially if you won't let your mind be renewed? If I pray that God would teach me to hunger and thirst for righteousness more, yet fill up my life with wordliness, do you expect that He would do anything. Sorry brothers, but faith without works is dead.

Persecution is promised to us, and I do not believe praying for it is wrong, just as praying that God would make us hunger and thirst for righteousness more is not wrong. HOWEVER: If you do not do anything that warrants suffering for His name's sake, don't expect God to answer your prayers.

The so-called church in America is not in danger of persecution, it is in danger of becoming sucked into worldliness. If you want to see the church grow into the Head of the Church as Ephesians says and for us to be counted worthy to suffer for His name, go and do that which is worthy to warrant such honor to the Lord--preach the Gospel.

The truth is that if Jesus is our goal--to know Him--then those things which the word says would happen to us, will happen to us. When I pray for the above things, it is a confession that I am not doing as I ought--abiding in Christ. Just look at what Paul said, "that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His SUFFERING, being conformed to His death..." THAT is not some mamby-pamby, "Jesus please bless my finances" goal. It is what we were made for, to be like Him in everything, including suffering.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2014/5/6 15:28

Jesus did not ask us to pray that our brothers and sisters around the world get murdered. If so, you should be bold and pray the power of specific prayers. Ask in faith. Name names. Anybody willing to volunteer? Maybe it can be part of the next prayer conference.

Maybe while we wait for Greg to volunteer his wife to be the first person we pray to die, we should pray that God turn up the heat on our Chinese or North Korean brethren? Not enough have died lately. China has been soft on them. There's been too much tolerance and they are starting to resemble the West.

See how absurd this sounds?

In Revelation we are told that those who have actually died the death of a martyr aren't asking the Lord to allow us to be further murdered. They are actually troubled over our deaths, and pray the Lord avenge our blood.

Sermon Index is a ministry that is starting to sound spiritually dangerous and cultish. Greg, I would plead with you, get out from behind the keyboard. Stop uploading sermons. If you aren't currently working a full time job 9-5 somewhere, for your own sanity brother, go find one. Maybe even pull the plug on this site for a while. Seriously, stop praying for people to die if you are actually doing so. I cannot even begin to tell you how egregious I think this is.

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2014/5/6 15:44

This isn't about death or about self-mortification.

This is about purification and the glory of God.

I do not hope that more people die or suffer, but I understand that the suffering and death are the will of the Father and that His name is glorified because of it.

Do I agree with everything on this forum about what is said in regards to persecution. No.

Is it wrong (sinful) to pray that the Lord would allow me to suffer for His sake? No. I do pray that sometimes, especially when I read in the scriptures regarding it. ESPECIALLY when I realize that the bible says that all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will endure persecution.

Do I revel in it and think more highly of myself than I ought to when it does happen? I have, but the Lord is changing my attitude from day to day. I am no special breed of Christian when persecution comes. I am just a Christian. It happens to all of us, as the Scriptures say. God forbid that I should glory in anything, except the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ...

So, I seek Jesus and, persecution or peace, I strive to know Him. I also know that what He said will happen to us, will happen to us. I am no fool. It is coming.

Re: Praying for persecution - posted by MaryJane, on: 2014/5/6 16:07

I agree, greater persecution is coming, to what degree I do not know but it is coming. I believe the things Greg is sharing here is in an attempt to share what the LORD is showing him. We are called to live our lives daily unto the LORD. We are called to live righteous and holy lives unto the LORD so why is there so much compromise in those who profess to be HIS in this country? The Bible does tell us that those who are HIS will face persecution, that is a fact that many already live with daily because they want to live a life solely unto JESUS. If I am living my life in HIM, walking with HIM daily then the truth is someone, somewhere is going to hate me for it and may even attempt to persecute me for it. The Bible says it is so, does that mean that it will be the same kind of persecution for everyone everywhere, I don't know but I do know I want to live my life ready in HIM no matter what.

I believe the opening post is speaking to the heart and the attitudes of many who profess the name JESUS. The question that comes to my mind is, am I truly living for HIM so fully that I would willingly lay down my life for JESUS and others or am I holding on to treasures and cares of this world? Will those who profess HIS name truly hold fast until the end as other martyred saints have done? Following JESUS will cost you, if we are truly standing firm in HIM it will cost us everything...its all about the heart.

God bless
mj

Re: - posted by Solomon101, on: 2014/5/6 17:25

I find it interesting the way the apostles and early believers prayed in the book of Acts when they were persecuted.

After Peter and John had their persecution for the incident of healing the lame man at The Beautiful Gate the believers prayed -

Quote:
-----now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, 30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.â€ 31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.
Acts 4:29-31 ESV

You must often confront persecution with the supernatural power of God to verify the message you carry. Recall Elijah on Carmel See the prayer of the Apostles above if heavy persecution comes then we better be praying for the supernatural to flow and be in a place in our lives that we can demonstrate, "signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.â€

This supernatural working of God through His followers to "confirm His word with signs following" combined with boldly declaring an uncompromised Gospel defeats persecution of the enemy not hiding in a rabbit holes.

Persecution does not purify the church. It causes those who merely "play church" to flee from it. It may APPEAR to purify because those who were not truly born again flee from the heat. However, persecution can not obtain purity. It is the blood of Christ that purifies and cleanses from sin ... not persecution. The power of the blood of Christ far exceeds the power of persecution.

Witness boldly, pray for and demonstrate supernatural signs, wonders, and healings by God's Hand. That is exactly how we see the apostles confronting and winning their world in the face of severe persecution.

Re: Jimmy, on: 2014/5/6 18:50

Brother you ARE TOTALLY OUT OF LINE regarding your comments about Greg. The comment about his wife Brandy was WAY OUT OF LINE.

Since you made the comments in a public forum I am compelled to rebuke you publicly. Brother you need to apologize to Greg publicly regarding your comments..

I may have reservations about what Greg may post.. If so then I will raise those issues in a private email. To openly disagree with someone`s position is one thing. To openly make comments of a personal nature particularly regarding one`s family is unacceptable and violates the rules of this forum.

Jimmy I can overlook your comments as youthful zeal. But you seriously need to apologize to Greg about your reference to his wife.

Blaine Scogin

Re: Jimmy - posted by Oracio (), on: 2014/5/6 20:03

Quote:
-----Brother you ARE TOTALLY OUT OF LINE regarding your comments about Greg. The comment about his wife Brandy was WAY OUT OF LINE.

Agree. It's one thing to respectfully disagree in a public venue such as this, since it is proper and expected to express disagreements at times. But to be so demeaning and spiteful toward brother Greg is not right.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2014/5/6 20:18

Quote:
-----Seriously, stop praying for people to die if you are actually doing so. I cannot even begin to tell you how egregious I think this is.

Brother,

I will take your post in love and not literal in every aspect. I personally am not scared or sad for the time if we ever came to it as a family that we would be martyrs for the Lord Jesus Christ. I am sure most of us will agree in the end that we will stand our Lord in that time if we have to.

I stand corrected in that thread that we should be praying for boldness to share the word of God that will result in persecution.

cution in some measure. And the original thought in the thread is NOT to pray for persecution to stop in China and North Korea but to pray MORE for them to be strengthened and be a witness of the Lord under persecution.

I do not see this as cultish but we do read in the Book of Acts that persecution and martyrdom happened all throughout it as well as all the original Apostles were martyred so if this is the cult we are speaking of I am glad to be a part of it. :)

Mega-church philosophy in the West is leading away to not being Christian and of course the thought of suffering and even martyrdom is foreign to these churches. David Wilkerson speaks of this in this message:

The Seeker Friendly Movement: A Prophetic Warning by David Wilkerson
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hc9B1vuhlpU&list=UUrcrDXK620kopfSffPxdTA>

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2014/5/6 22:26

The Bible nowhere tells us to pray for persecution, what the Bible does teach however is that all Christians are in a spiritual war.

The fallacy I feel with this thread is that it seems to give the impression that Western Christians are somehow exempt from this battle, that they somehow have no problems thus they have no need to cling to God, but the fact is we are all in the battle.

I would highly recommend this David Wilkerson sermon to all the readers and responders to this thread : The Private War of a Saint :

<http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid=15852&commentView=itemComments>

Re: , on: 2014/5/7 3:00

Brother Jimmy,

Are you aware that the OP is cut and paste from the link to another website? Brother Greg did not write this...you know what they say about ASS-U-ME :)

Anyway, you sound pretty hot under the collar but that doesn't mean it's ok to lash out at people, especially bro Greg. I think by tomorrow you will realize that the Holy Spirit did not inspire the tone of your words, and you will know what to do:)

Having said that you make some very good points and here is my take on some things that are being said:

- 1) just because there is not widespread religious persecution in America does not mean there is not the potential for any of us to take on as much personal persecution as we can gobble down. If anyone would like persecution just go ahead and break any and all current religious containment laws in your area and you will have the strong arm of "persecution" headed your way. The truth is that we have very few laws (yet) that are against us.
- 2) Persecution should not be our goal and neither should boldness to witness, our goal ought to be our complete and total dependence on a God. We are to look to God in everything and through everything, He must become the main "Thing", the One whom we seek, without ceasing. This should be the goal of our lives and as we seek Him, His reward to us is that He will truly be our source, our shield, our deliverer, a very present help in trouble.
- 3) If and until the kind of persecution that China and NK and other countries experience, arrives on our doorstep...God is not short of ways to allow us the joy of sharing in Christ's sufferings! Any believer who has no idea what "momentary light affliction" means, or does not know what it means to "suffer in the flesh", is either completely backslidden or is not yet, "In Christ". These means of grace, though not as dramatic as being locked in prison and tortured, are still legitimate means by which God perfects His children.
- 4) This site is a wonderful and a remarkable contrast and counterbalance to the fake, man centered, false gospel Christianity that now dominates the west. I pray that God's hand will remain on this site and brother Greg. However, your warning may have some merit, it is easy to take some of the extreme views and create an unhealthy focus on being last days "remnant". In fact the Church of Wells have done just that. One would be hard pressed to find much difference between what they preach and the preaching of say, Paul Washer.

There is an important lesson in that for all of us. I also notice that these forums get a lot of attention on end times, government intervention and these controversial sorts of things, but very little discussion on teaching that deal with personals revival, dying to self, broken and contriteness and being conform to the image of Christ. And if these or similar thoughts ever do come up they quickly descend into quarrels. Very little discussion here about what God is doing in each of our lives in this respect.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2014/5/7 6:12

We know how David prayed when He was persecuted.

Re: , on: 2014/5/7 9:44

Quote:
-----You must often confront persecution with the supernatural power of God to verify the message you carry. Recall Elijah on Carmel ...
. See the prayer of the Apostles above if heavy persecution comes then we better be praying for the supernatural to flow and be in a place in our lives that we can demonstrate, "signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.â€

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Witness boldly, pray for and demonstrate supernatural signs, wonders, and healings by God's Hand. That is exactly how we see the apostles confronting and winning their world in the face of severe persecution. Solomon101

Amen Brother to every word of that.

It will no doubt seem a strange thing to say it, but I do pray for persecution precisely on the grounds Solomon has written . Why? When I have given thought to those things which the Lord has laid on my own heart I see a time when it will be necessary for some brethren to hold the hands of those who are going to their deaths, even their own families. Then those who hold their hands, having done all in a peaceably spirit to bear witness of the rich mercy of God, will turn and bring the wrath of God down upon the heads of those who in the face of such peace and quietness will not repent. If the evil unbeliever will not repent in the face of quiet suffering and death, how will they repent? They will repent by the fierce wrath of God and the fear of the Lord. Those who resist even the just anger of the Father, and still will not repent will be given over to destruction in the hardening of their hearts. Then the tribulation will come. Then there will be no more an opportunity to resist anyone.

Re: , on: 2014/5/7 9:59

"This supernatural working of God through His followers to "confirm His word with signs following" combined with boldly declaring an uncompromised Gospel defeats persecution of the enemy not hiding in a rabbit holes."

My spirit witnesses with this statement. When the enemy comes in like a flood, then God raises up a standard. Now a standard symbolizes the flag. We used to have what was called a standard bearer. They were remarkable people. They would lead troops into battle not with a gun or a sword, but by holding aloft the standard. When the bearer would fall, then another would rush to take his place and so raise the standard high above the battle field. When you plant a flag it denotes possession. The flag, the standard, carries with it the right of ownership. God has a remnant group of saints around the world and make no mistake, He has them in North America, and they are fully possessed by Him.

When the enemy comes in like a flood and it seems that we shall be overwhelmed, He pours His Spirit into them in measures not normally seen and it gives them the courage to rush forward and maintain their momentum. This momentum is a heaven bound momentum come hell or high water. It is supernatural. And as God pours out His Spirit so, signs and wonders follow. Miracles of every kind testify to the saints who overcome the enemy by the Blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony and the fact that they love not their lives unto death. Truly remarkable. Every genuine saint, whether in China or North Korea or North America has this Spirit in them and I praise God for every brother and sister around the world. The Body of Christ is one, and there is no member elevated above another, to do so is to have fallen back into the f

lesh.....bro Frank

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2014/5/7 13:16

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

Peter says that suffering purifies our faith. Persecution, sickness, loss of anything, etc..."that the genuineness of your faith...may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ..."

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2014/5/7 17:35

Quote:

Brother you ARE TOTALLY OUT OF LINE regarding your comments about Greg. The comment about his wife Brandy was WAY OUT OF LINE.

I have nothing personal against Greg or his wife. I don't even know his wife's name. I only made reference to her to highlight the reality of what we are talking about, because I don't feel this absurd idea of praying for God to send men to kill us is being taken seriously enough.

I mentioned her only to put a face on what we are actually talking about. We are talking about the martyrdom of real people here. If you are angered over my reference to her, then I think you are getting angry at the wrong person. I'm not the one here talking about praying for God to send persecution of the church to the West. I'm not the one praying for somebody to be murdered.

This is not the first time the idea has floated around on Sermon Index. And frankly, I find the idea repulsive. The idea should be banned from here with the same swiftness at which other bad and repugnant ideas are quickly dealt with. It should be treated as a heresy that must be stomped out.

Quote:

Jimmy I can overlook your comments as youthful zeal. But you seriously need to apologize to Greg about your reference to his wife.

Unless I've misunderstood what has been said, I see no reason to apologize.

Also, while we are at it...

Nobody here denies that godly living invites persecution. Scripture clearly says so. Nobody here denies being persecuted is a blessed thing. Scripture clearly says so. Nobody here denies there is a slumber in the church in America. That is a self-evident truth.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2014/5/7 17:39

Quote:

Are you aware that the OP is cut and paste from the link to another website? Brother Greg did not write this...you know what they say about ASS-U-M E :)

Yes.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2014/5/7 17:40

Quote:

I will take your post in love and not literal in every aspect.

Of course, I know we don't really interact anymore, but I believe you know my heart brother. I mean no ill will whatsoever.

Quote:

I personally am not scared or sad for the time if we ever came to it as a family that we would be martyrs for the Lord Jesus Christ. I am sure most of us will agree in the end that we will stand our Lord in that time if we have to.

Amen

Re: Jimmy, on: 2014/5/7 18:33

Brother I went back and read your post to Greg. I seriously believe you need to apologize to him. But that must be between you and God.

There is a way to disagree with someone's position without attacking them personally. In other words you play the ball and not the man.

Jim you have made some good points in this thread. But your post where you challenged Greg was totally unacceptable. Your passions got the better of you. I know, bro, I have written things even in this forum and have had to repent of them. And I am trying to show restraint in my passion as I write.

Jim I assume you are a professional. I assume you hold a mid level management position in a bank. I can see you being a VP or a CEO. But brother you need to mature and control your passions and think before you write. I hope you are more thoughtful in your work emails than your post here in this thread. Otherwise you probably will not have that 9 to 5 job God has blessed you with much longer.

Jim the wisdom I am offering you comes from someone who is twice your age and has walked with the Lord before your birth. Brother a wise man would heed the wisdom of older saints.

By the way it takes a big man to apologize. But brother you will gain more respect in this forum if you do.

These are just some thoughts from an older brother who has been around the block a few times. I live them between you and the Lord.

Blaine