

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: Learning to Stand for Jesus

SERMON REFERENCE: Matthew 5:10-14

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2489

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Many of us believe that we are living in the receding shadows of the end of the age.
 - i) We see signs of the times all about us.
 - ii) One of those signs is the persecution of Christians.
- b) Many Christians are folding up when they ought to be standing up for the Lord Jesus.
- c) One of the things parents need to teach their children is to be settled in the faith so that they can stand on the solid rock of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- d) Matthew 5:10-14
- e) If we stand up for the Lord Jesus Christ, then we are going to be persecuted.
 - i) The Bible says that all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
 - (1) 2 Timothy 3:12
- f) There is a way that a person can escape persecution.
 - i) It is by not living godly.
 - (1) We can rub shoulders with the people of this world and fail to take a stance, fail to be distinctive, and then we will not suffer persecution.
 - (2) Just not taking a stand for anything.
- g) The persecution someone receives is the thermometer that registers their love and courage for the Lord Jesus Christ.
- h) In today's message, we will look at what the Lord Jesus says about the persecution we who love Him will receive if we stand for Him.

2) THE REASONS FOR THIS PERSECUTION

- a) The first reason is the life that we show.
 - i) Matthew 5:10
 - (1) The world will persecute someone if they live a lifestyle of righteousness.
 - (2) In this verse, the root word for "persecute" is a word which means "to divide" or "to separate."
 - (a) A person who is righteous is divided or separated from this world.
 - ii) Not everybody is going to be persecuted.
 - (1) A person has to earn persecution, and the way to earn it is to be different.
 - iii) Righteousness is described in Matthew 5 by the Beatitudes.
 - (1) Matthew 5:3-10
 - (a) Be pure in heart, mourn, hunger and thirst after righteousness.
 - (b) If we do these things, the next Beatitude is obvious:
 - (i) "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake."
 - 1. Matthew 5:10
 - 2. If you are not righteous, then you are not going to be persecuted.

- (2) Righteousness divides.
- iv) The Bible says that we are a peculiar people.
 - (1) 1 Peter 2:9
 - (2) We are different from the world.
 - (a) Our faith is different.
 - (i) It starts at a different source.
 - (ii) It follows a different course.
 - (iii) It ends at a different destination.
 - (b) There is a wide road and a narrow road.
 - (i) It doesn't mean that the wide road and narrow road are running parallel.
 - (ii) The narrow road is going in the opposite direction of the wide road.
 - 1. When we stop being in collusion with the devil, we will find ourselves being in collision with him.
 - (3) We are children of light; they are children of darkness.
 - (4) We live by the Spirit; they live in sin.
 - (5) We live by faith; they live by sight.
 - (6) We understand them; they do not understand us.
 - (7) Matthew 5:13 says that we are the salt of the Earth.
 - (a) Salt stings; it irritates when it is rubbed into a wound.
 - (8) We are the light of the world.
 - (a) Matthew 5:14
 - (b) Light reveals and exposes.
 - (c) The world, by nature, does not want the salt nor the light.
- v) Some may be persecuted, but they may not be persecuted for righteousness' sake.
 - (1) Jesus said that it must be for righteousness and for His name's sake that we are persecuted.
 - (a) 1 Peter 4:14-16
 - (i) Don't suffer as a busy body in other people's matters.
 - (b) The persecution must be false, and it must be for Jesus' sake.
- vi) The word "persecution" also means "to pursue."
 - (1) When we are different, they will pursue us.
 - (2) They will try to find some flaw, some difference in us.
 - (a) When they find it, it will make them feel better as they condemn us.
 - (3) The Bible describes a time when Jesus was going through a wheat field, and He was hungry.
 - (a) Matthew 12:1-8
 - (b) It was the Sabbath, and Jesus and His disciples plucked some wheat and began to thresh it with their hands and eat it.
 - (i) The Pharisees accused them of breaking the Sabbath.
 - (ii) What were the Pharisees doing in a wheat field on the Sabbath?
 - 1. They were following or pursuing Jesus.

- a. People will also be watching us to try to find something they can criticize us for.
- b) The lies that we suffer.
 - i) Matthew 5:11
 - ii) They will tell lies about us.
 - (1) They will say things about us that are not true.
 - iii) The most righteous person who ever lived was Jesus.
 - (1) They crucified Him with false witnesses.
 - (a) They lied about the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - iv) We can expect any child of God to be lied about.
 - v) One of the reasons we are persecuted is because we are lied about.
- c) The Lord we serve.
 - i) Matthew 5:11
 - ii) The Lord Jesus is the reason that we are persecuted.
 - iii) This world hates Jesus.
 - (1) The world has no qualms with the baby Jesus.
 - (a) The merchants are happy for the baby Jesus.
 - (i) They make money on the birth of Jesus that we celebrate.
 - (2) The world doesn't hate the Jesus who healed the sick.
 - (3) The world doesn't hate the Jesus who fed the multitudes.
 - (4) The world hates Jesus because He came to destroy the works of the devil.
 - (a) Jesus came against liquor, abortion, pornography, pride, racism, and hatred.
 - iv) John 15:19-22
 - (1) Jesus came to condemn sin.
 - (2) Jesus exposed their sin, and they hated Him.
 - (a) They still hate Him.

3) THE RESULTS OF THIS PERSECUTION

- a) Matthew 5:11
- b) There are going to be personal insults.
 - i) They will revile us.
 - ii) They will say things about us that are not flattering.
 - iii) We will find ourselves the butt of jokes.
 - iv) We will be looked down upon.
- c) There may be physical intimidation.
 - i) Matthew 5:11
 - ii) There are people who have gone to prison because they stood against sin and stood up for the unborn.
 - iii) Christians have been martyred, and many have suffered unimaginable torture and deprivation.
- d) There will be social injustice.
 - i) Matthew 5:11

- ii) Jesus gave a warning about this.
 - (1) Mark 13:9-13
 - (a) This passage of Scripture deals with the Great Tribulation and the horrors of the Great Tribulation.
 - (i) We see foregleams of this today.
- iii) The injustice is going to come from the religious world.
 - (1) Mark 13:9
 - (a) They will bring you before councils and synagogues.
 - (2) The religious world will persecute us.
 - (3) There are those who don't want the Lordship of Jesus Christ preached.
- iv) This injustice will come from the governmental world.
 - (1) Mark 13:9
 - (2) The world system is against Jesus.
 - (a) It has been said that it is unconstitutional to teach in public schools that traditional marriage between a man and a woman is a traditional American value.
- v) This injustice will come from our own families.
 - (1) Mark 13:12
 - (2) We may be persecuted by those closest to us.

4) OUR RESPONSE TO THIS PERSECUTION

- a) We should learn to reign in life.
 - i) Matthew 5:10
 - (1) Scripture literally says concerning the persecuted, "For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."
 - (a) We have a Kingdom.
 - ii) We reign with Christ in life.
 - (1) When we are persecuted, we need to remember who we are.
 - (a) We are children of the Kingdom.
 - (i) Because we're children of the Kingdom, we should reign in life.
 - iii) There are three levels of life:
 - (1) The hellish level.
 - (a) This level returns evil for good.
 - (2) The human level.
 - (a) This level returns evil for evil and good for good.
 - (3) The heavenly level.
 - (a) This level returns good for evil.
 - iv) Matthew 5:43-45
 - (1) When we are persecuted, we are not to try to get even.
 - (a) When we get even, we leave our status (our position) and are no longer reigning with the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - v) It has been said that we need people who do the following:
 - (1) They walk on amid criticism, condemnation, and cursings.

- (2) They are content to know that in their very molding and making there is something so royal as to defend them forever against such mouthings.
- vi) Don't forget who you are.
 - (1) We are children of the Kingdom.
- b) We rejoice in the Lord.
 - i) Matthew 5:12
 - (1) The word "rejoice" has the idea of leaping and dancing.
 - (a) Don't sit in the corner and feel sorry for yourself.
 - ii) Think of the company we resemble.
 - (1) The prophets were persecuted.
 - (a) Matthew 5:12
 - iii) There is the character we reveal.
 - (1) We are living for Jesus.
 - iv) There is the compensation we receive.
 - (1) Great is our reward in Heaven.
 - (2) It pays to serve Jesus.
 - v) In the early part of the book of Acts, there were some disciples who were being persecuted and had been put in prison.
 - (1) They had been beaten, but they kept preaching Jesus.
 - (2) The disciples, having been persecuted, reacted in such a way that the people of this world said that they were like the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (a) Acts 4:13
 - vi) When we are persecuted, we need to stay true to the Lord Jesus Christ and rejoice in the Lord.
- c) We release love.
 - i) Love those who persecute you.
 - ii) Matthew 5:44-45
 - iii) Releasing love will be so much easier to do if we reign in life and understand who we are: children of the Kingdom.
 - iv) This love is not mere sympathy; it is doing good to them.
 - (1) God makes it to rain on the just and the unjust.
 - (a) Matthew 5:45
 - (2) Be like God, and love them.
 - (a) Where would we be if God didn't love us?
 - v) Those who persecute us are blind.
 - (1) They don't have life.
 - (2) They don't understand.
 - (3) The Bible says that in the last days, those who kill us will think that they are doing God a service.
 - (4) They are blind and need love.
 - (a) We need to treat them as God has treated us.
 - vi) The book of Acts tells of Stephen, who was one of the first deacons in the Bible.

- (1) Acts 6:8 – 7:60
- (2) He was a powerful preacher of the Word of God.
- (3) They couldn't change him or intimidate him, so they stoned him to death.
- (4) There was a young man named Saul who held the garments of those who were doing the stoning.
 - (a) Later on, Saul's name was changed to Paul, and he became the mightiest Christian missionary and theologian that the world has ever known.
 - (i) What changed Saul was the way that Stephen died.
 1. As Stephen was dying, he asked the Lord not to charge this terrible thing to the account of those who were stoning him.
 - a. Acts 7:60
 - b. Saul (Paul) never forgot that.
 2. When the Lord Jesus met Saul on the road to Damascus, the Lord said that it was hard for him to kick against the goad.
 - a. Acts 9:4-5
 - b. What was goading Saul?
 - i. It was the face of a man that shined like an angel, who released love when he was persecuted.
- 5) CONCLUSION
 - a) You are going to be persecuted.
 - b) All who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
 - i) 2 Timothy 3:12
 - c) Parents need to teach their children to stand up for Jesus.
 - d) These are days of golden opportunity to share the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - e) If you are a Christian, ask the Lord to help you not be intimidated by the world, to help you stand tall and to not be afraid.
 - i) Philippians 1:28
 - f) If you are not a Christian, won't you be saved today?
 - g) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
 - h) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16