
The Story of Jesus

Published By Evangelist Van Billingsley

Summer 2009

Our Bands and Cords

“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.”

— Psalm 2:1-3

Over the past year we’ve seen an even greater turn in the tide against the Christian in our country than we may have been pre-

pared for. I have been preaching for several years that we as Christians need to not only stand and fight to strengthen our bands and cords of Christianity in our nation, but we need to be prepared to lose ground as the Bible declares will happen, and we need to be prepared to stand against true persecution.

For this cause, I have chosen to reprint an article originally written for this newsletter several years ago. We have not edited the content, so bear in mind it was written in 2005.

(Reprinted from our Fall 2005 Edition)

TRUE PERSECUTION AHEAD?

by Evangelist Van Billingsley

In this space I normally write a regular sermon following a traditional outline, but I’d like to break from that pattern in this edition to simply discuss an important topic facing the child of God today and in the coming days.

I’m afraid Christians may not be prepared for what we are about to face. We’ve gotten used to the comfort and freedom we’ve enjoyed for many years. We know sin is rampant and getting worse everyday. Paul said

to Timothy, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come" (2 Tim. 3:1). He goes on to detail the wickedness we see so prevalent today. This deals with the wickedness of the world rather than the hardships on the Christian, but Jesus warned

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Our Ministry News...

From the Desk of the Editor



Well, it's summer time again, which means the heat is back. This is that yearly global warming that happens in a twelve month cycle. Actually, that would be the northern hemisphere warming; it just moves around the globe. I could not help but to make a little pun there since the "Global Warming" hoax has been unraveling lately.

The liberals, the left, Hollywood, the media and all the other forces Satan has in this wicked world will certainly continue to wage war against true Christianity. I can't stress enough the importance of the article on persecution in this issue.

As for our news, summer means a busy schedule for our ministry. We've already taken our youth from Gospel Light Baptist Mission to summer camp at Living Waters Baptist Youth Camp. We had a wonderful time and our young people received some much needed spiritual help. I would like to extend a special thanks to all

those who donated to pay the expenses of this trip.

I have just completed my part in helping with the VBS at my home church. I had to leave for another meeting with a few days left, but I witnessed God doing great things while I was there.

In just a few weeks, we'll be holding our VBS/Revival at our mission church, Gospel Light Baptist Mission. We are looking forward to seeing what God has in store for this meeting. Please pray for those services with us.

Over the past few months we've been able to add to the ministries God allows us to assist with website services. Please pray that God will give us wisdom in managing our time in this effort as well as meeting the financial needs in this area.

With these prayer needs mentioned, I'll just close by asking you to pray for us in all God allows us to do in His service.

A Servant of Christ,
Evangelist Van Billingsley

"Persecution"

(continued from cover) --

us of times of persecution and tribulation:

"But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and fam-

ines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake" (Luke 21:9-12).

Jesus speaks of Christians being persecuted physically, brought into courts and thrown into prisons. We are not accustomed to this

today, but should we expect this? We are told by Jesus to expect this! Paul said to Timothy, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). He wrote to Thessalonica, "For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know" (1 Thes. 3:4), and "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure" (2 Thes. 1:4).

Without getting into an in-depth discussion on the great tribulation, we need to establish the difference between persecution and tribulation on Christians from the world, and the wrath of God poured out on the earth which is the great tribulation. This simple fact is often missed by those who think the church will go through any part of what we know as "The Tribulation Period," simply because scripture states we will face tribulations. Paul told the saints at Thessalonica that we were saved "...to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Thes. 1:9,10). God's Word promises us that He will not pour out His wrath upon His children, but upon the wicked world. "The Great Tribulation" or "The Tribulation Period" is the wrath of God, but we will be persecuted by and face tribulation from this wicked world.


So with the freedoms, liberties, and rights we've grown up with, can we expect this kind of physical persecution and even imprison-

ment for our faith? The fact is, Christians in New Testament times and throughout the early church, faced this very thing. Should we believe the Christians living in the final days before the end times will not face times as hard as those of the early church? Some may assume that Christians in other parts of the world may face these persecutions and tribulations, but this will not apply to Christians in America. Again, I say, I'm afraid the American Christian is not prepared to face what may lie ahead. Someone laughs at us because we do not indulge in their sinful practice and we consider ourselves persecuted. Someone turns down a tract and we think we've faced tribulation. If we had a door slammed in our face, we'd just about consider ourselves a martyr!

I do see a troubling trend in our nation which I believe is going to lead to the end time persecution in America. These things are working together in progression to set the stage for true Christianity to be a crime that will send us to prison. I'm not talking about saying you are a Christian, or attending some semblance of a worship service. I mean practicing real Christianity, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ which requires naming and condemning sin; the sort of thing that cost John the Baptist his head.

We've seen most of the things I'm talking about develop over the past ten to fifteen years. It all began with the birth of so-called hate crimes and hate speech. Wicked, ungodly, and perverse life-styles are being la

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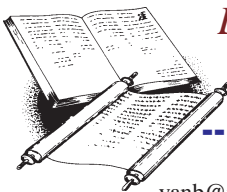
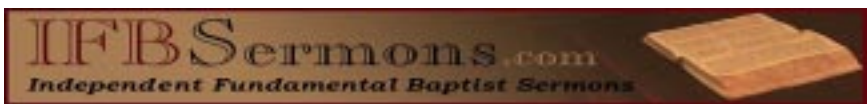
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beled as a class of Americans with protected civil rights. Free speech is now being classified as hate speech under these new hate crimes. Something called "Tolerance" is being lifted up as the ultimate modern virtue, while Christian and Biblical values are being labeled as "Intolerant" and "Hatred." For the first few years this seemed like just a word battle between Christians and a far left society, but since Sept. 11, 2001, we have entered a different world. We now see terrorist Muslim extremist preaching murder and mass murder in the name of religion. We know something must be done to stop this! Eventually, attitudes must change toward using religion to protect such activities. Policies and practices must be developed in America and around the world to stop this practice before attacks are launched. At the same time, strong efforts are being made to proclaim Islam as a noble and peaceful religion, while true Christianity is being deemed radical and unacceptable. A few isolated whackos who have targeted and attacked abortionists

and sodomites are portrayed as "Christian extremists" and connected with so-called churches. There are even some idiotic groups claiming to be Christians who cheer on such acts. Now Pat Robertson, who while running for president, denied being a "preacher," but a "Christian commentator," is now referred to as an "Evangelical Preacher" when he suggests the assassination of the wicked leader of another country. All this is setting the precedent for laws to be written and enforced to make it a crime to preach against sin and declare the acceptance of Jesus Christ as the only escape of eternal damnation. To preach that trusting in other politically correct religions will send you to hell will certify you a racist, a bigot, and even a criminal. It will strip you of any respect, exclude you from your rights as a citizen and eventually land you in prison. Yes, I believe we are on our way there. Are you ready to be a true, practicing and active Christian in the coming days? We need to learn how to live the faith of our fathers!

-- VB



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proclaiming

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