

Articles and Sermons :: The Coming Great Persecution - Greg Gordon

The Coming Great Persecution - Greg Gordon - posted by sermonindex, on: 2012/5/25 11:17

“Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other” (Matthew 24:9-10)

Our Lord spoke these sobering words to us in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 24 . Something in us does not want to accept the idea that in the end times all nations will hate and persecute Christians.

This seems like a non-reality to us and something that could never happen because we live in such religiously tolerant countries such as Canada, United Kingdom and America. We would like to edit our Lord's words and abbreviate them with a softer less harsh reality.

But this will not change the truth our Lord said would happen.

We live in cultures that shun away from pain of any kind, there are pills and remedies for even the slightest discomfort in our bodies. In such an environment persecution and suffering in our bodies for the faith of Jesus Christ seems even more absurd. There is not only a confusion over these things but there is a danger of complacency and comfort that will have us unprepared for the time that will come upon us.

I recently watched a short documentary on the sad events of the 2004 boxing day Tsunami that hit Indonesia that caused almost a quarter of a million deaths.

The video showed the Tsunami spreading to different regions and hitting the shores of heavily populated areas. What struck me with the complacency of the people in the different areas, even the amusement of it all. At one beach they see a white crescent on the distant horizon spreading across the entire large bay. People watch mesmerized as this white crescent comes nearer and nearer. When the wave swallows up 2 ships in the bay some of the watchers realize the magnitude of the event that is about to strike but for most it is too late. In another shoreline people smile and laugh in amusement as the entire bay is emptied of water and ships are beached. It begins a spectacle that is full of fun and amusement as people take pictures and as the water comes back in they consider it something fun to watch. Yet when the wave came into that shoreline so many were caught unawares and their running was in vain, multitudes are screaming as they are swallowed in the waves and dragged back out to sea never to return.

I was watching the video a sobriety came over me not just over the deaths of so many people but of what is about to come upon the world of Christians and some of us not being aware of the times we are living in.

Many of us do not believe this could be the end of times we are living in.

Just as the Tsunami came without warning and even came with a delusion or spectacle, so the coming of the end times persecution will come upon many Christians unawares. I am not arguing for any type of position of the rapture of the church if it is either pre or post in this short article. Yet I believe firmly that we will all feel like we are in the great tribulation when this end time persecution wave hits the church. The birth pains will become worse and worse and many of those that have believed in a pre-tribulational rapture that would have them escape from all suffering will be 100% unprepared for what is going to come upon them.

Persecution of Christians has not diminished but world wide has been increasing yearly.

More Christians were martyred in the 20th century than in all previous centuries combined. Most of the apostles (Philip, Matthew, Mark, Peter, Paul ...) were martyred. Many were martyred in the Middle Ages (Huss, Jerome, Joan of Arc ...). Between 1540 and 1570 some one million Protestants were publicly put to death in various countries in Europe. Overall, some 50 million were martyred by the Roman Catholic Inquisition for 'heresy' between 606 AD and the middle of the 19th century. Protestant reformers (More, Tyndale, Latimer, Cranmer ...) were martyred. Some 20 million were martyred du

ring the 70 years of Russian atheism and communism. And some theologian just over 100 years ago in a land where persecution does not exist promoted a theology that the end times church will not suffer and be taken away before all these things happen.

This is not only a sad mistake in dispensational theology it is resulting in many Christians in our day to not be aware of the coming persecution.

The Apostle John said to the church in his day that they should not be surprised if the world hated them (1 John 3:13). Our Lord Jesus said in the Gospel of Luke that all men will hate us not just nations (Luke 21:17). But also gives us the comfort in these words: "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first." (John 15:18). May we prepare in our minds to suffer for the Name of Christ in our bodies (1 Peter 4:1). May we be aware of the times and seasons that are coming upon us.

I offer a few practical suggestions:

One to start with is to read the lives of martyrs in the Christian faith from such as the great book "Foxes Book of Martyrs." Develop a theology of suffering from the Scriptures and don't allow small inconveniences and pains to disturb you. Study the Scriptures towards the theme of martyrdom especially in the book of revelation. May we also be bold to stand for the Name of Jesus Christ and therefore not be ashamed before Him before others (2 Timothy 3:12).

comment on this article also here: <http://www.greggordon.net/the-coming-great-persecution/>

Re: The Coming Great Persecution - Greg Gordon - posted by bearnaster, on: 2012/5/25 16:25

Brother I agree with the thrust of your article. But I fear this forum is like those who are watching the tsunamie. They want know what hit them until it is too late.

Bearnaster.

Re: - posted by a-servant, on: 2012/5/25 17:23

"Many of us do not believe this could be the end of times we are living in."

Yes, this is a highly complicated topic if we go beyond the mistakes of dispensational theology and try to get to the personal level of it. It's like a two-sided realisation. On one side the proof is openly visible of what's coming next and will change all of our lives like nothing before in human history. On the other side even after seeing that clearly nobody truly wants to admit it to themselves on a deep personal level that involves the fact that it will touch about almost anything we hold on to currently.

It is offensive to the mind to think about it in its totality. I'm even tempted to block it out entirely and think and talk about pleasant things instead. Yes, I'm that honest to myself right now. Basically I can see what's coming in people's faces when sitting in a large public place, it's almost tangible right below the surface of the public smile. We all know that something is amiss, and it troubles us.

May the Lord bless us not only with a ability to stand, but also with the ability to face this situation in the first place. I think that's the most difficult part of it, because once it starts we will just react. Now we still can prepare mentally and spiritually and can bring our level of faith to a practical reality where we will fully and exclusively rely on His directions and provisions.

Re: The Coming Great Persecution - Greg Gordon - posted by RobertW (), on: 2012/5/25 20:49

Quote:
-----The video showed the Tsunami spreading to different regions and hitting the shores of heavily populated areas. What struck me with the complacency of the people in the different areas, even the amusement of it all. At one beach they see a white crescent on the distant horizon spreading across the entire large bay. People watch mesmerized as this white crescent comes nearer and nearer. When the wave swallows up 2 ships in the bay some of the watchers realize the magnitude of the event that is about to strike but for most it is too late. In another shoreline people smile and laugh in amusement as the entire bay is emptied of water and ships are beached. It begins a spectacle that is full of fun and amusement as people take pictures and as the water comes back in they consider it something fun to watch. Yet when the wave came into that shoreline so many were caught unawares and their running was in vain, multitudes are screaming as they are swallowed in the waves and dragged back out to sea never to return.

I think this is all too often true. In our part of the world we have severe storms and tornadoes every year. I have been in tornado warnings and folks just walking around like nothing was going on. Business as usual. Others I have seen stand outside almost for the sheer entertainment value. I have heard the sound of a tornado as that of a huge jet engine while those around me paid little attention. I shouted get to the basement NOW! "Whats wrong with him?" We have to know the times. We can't allow ourselves to get insensitive to what is happening.

Re: - posted by bearmaster, on: 2012/5/26 6:14

I know this thread will slip quietly away into the cyber archives of SI. We do not want to think of the reality of persecution. We want to archive it in the recesses of our minds. The reality of the death camps of N. Korea or the shipping containers of Eritrea do not resonate with us. We regard the V.O.M. magazine as a graphic novel of fiction. I mean. Come on. Christs being martyred around the world is pure fantasy. This does not happen.

To suggest such some in this forum, even, accuse you of conspiracy. Far easier to debate the KJV or the head covering. Or let us trust in a cultist than trust in Jesus. We deceive ourselves into thinking we are standing for truth. For this is the mesmerized church of America watching the approaching tsunami. Peace and safety, the American way. Then the sudden destruction will come.

For surely the true remnant is found in those death camps of N. Korea or the shipping containers of Eritrea. And frankly I do not consider myself worthy to be in their company.

O God grant us repentance. Please wake up a remnant in America who will follow Jesus. Even unto death.

Bearmaster.

Re: - posted by sermonindex, on: 2012/5/26 9:47

Amen brother. The sad thing is as we are sitting in our fast food restaurant eating a nice meal and enjoying life the idea of persecution coming suddenly on us is pure fiction as you stated. But it is coming. it will catch many off guard. I do plead with you for others in the forums to consider these things and spread this message.

On my blog there is a way to Facebook like and tweet this message and many have already, this is one way to get it out: <http://www.greggordon.net/the-coming-great-persecution/>

May God bring a sobriety to us in these last days.

Re: - posted by bearmaster, on: 2012/5/26 10:09

Though filled with symbolism and imagery, the book of Revelation speaks of a persecuted people. After reading or listening to this marvelous book one gets the idea that God is redeeming a people through persecution.

There will be a remnant who will come out of every nation, tribe, language, and people. They will be taken to heaven. But it will be through martyrdom, not a pretrib rapture. They will be the ones who will be victorious over Satan. For they will not love their own lives unto death. But they will love him and willingly lay down their lives for him.

Dear Jesus. Grant that we be such a people.

Bearmaster.

Re: Greg - posted by bearmaster, on: 2012/5/26 10:11

Brother will get the message out.

Bearmaster.

Re: - posted by sermonindex, on: 2012/5/26 10:57

Thank you dear brother for your encourage and prayers. I have just released another article following up this one:

Hated by All Nations For The Testimony of Christ

<http://www.greggordon.net/hated-by-all-nations-for-the-testimony-of-christ/>

Re: - posted by bearmaster, on: 2012/5/26 15:14

Greg read the other article. Tried to post a response but could not enable the sign in protocols. In a nutshell the article is very thought provoking and sobering. Persecution will come upon the whole world and soon. Those who live in foreign countries such as Eritrea, N. Korea, China, Iran Nigeria, etc. will be able to withstand what is coming. They live with the reality of dying for Christ daily.

We in America and Canada will have to learn and quickly. I agree. We must immerse ourselves in the literature of the persecuted past and present. Also study the history of those persecuted past and present. I have been listening to Danny Kennadton's series on the Anabaptist and what they endured. Mist excellent.

Brother I hope you keep putting out the articles in persecution. The western church needs to wake up.

God grant that we be a people of courage to endure persecution in these end times.

Bearmaster.

Re: - posted by bearmaster, on: 2012/5/26 15:23

Another thing that comes to mind is immersing ourselves in the Bible, at least the New Testament. We need to have his word dwelling in us richly to sustain us during those times of imprisonment. Letters from believers imprisoned past and present encourage those saints still free to hide the word of God in their hearts.

Bearmaster.

Re: - posted by sermonindex, on: 2012/5/26 16:27

Quote:
-----Greg read the other article. Tried to post a response but could not enable the sign in protocols. In a nutshell the article is very thought provoking and sobering. Persecution will come upon the whole world and soon. Those who live in foreign countries such as Eritrea, N. Korea, China, Iran Nigeria, etc. will be able to withstand what is coming. They live with the reality of dying for Christ daily

Amen we must start to consider this reality for ourselves also dear brother, great comments.

To post on that site you just fill in your name, email and website (optional) and just leave a comment and press submit. There is no official registration for posting.

Re: , on: 2012/5/26 17:01

Ro 5:1 ¶ Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in "tribulations" also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2012/5/26 17:56

we are to please God by being caught up in His love and presence. We are to be filled with the Holy Spirit rejoicing in Him always knowing that He will give us power to witness Jesus after the Holy Ghost has come upon us.

We don't need to focus on persecution but to only focus on the Lord's love and power over everything. Let's not fool ourselves into fearful and feigned pious thinking.

Re: The Coming Great Persecution - Greg Gordon - posted by ccchhrrriiss (), on: 2012/5/26 20:03

This is a timely article with very good suggestions, Greg.

Believers, in the west, have largely been sheltered from the persecution that believers around the world have endured for 2000 years. The threat of persecution or even martyrdom is a daily part of life in many nations. I have met believers who lived under the scourge of communism and

I think that Foxe's Book of Martyrs" is a very important read for believers to understand the devotion by which saints have historically served the Lord. It is such an honor to lay down our lives for the Lord. It isn't difficult or unthinkable for those who have already laid down their lives as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1-2). It is simply the final measure of devotion to Christ.

Lately, I have been thinking about how individuals face death. The people of this world -- especially those who believe that life is nothing more than a cosmic accident or the result of "lucky physics" -- face death without hope. Many of them think that life is all there is...so they hang on tenaciously to it. Those who kill themselves often do so because they either believe that all life and consciousness will end at the moment that they die. They see it as just ending that accident.

Yet we are not like them.

The hope that we have (as believers) is that death has no sting. At death, we pass into Eternity. After a billion years, life will seem as if it has just begun. A trillion years later, all of our light and momentary afflictions will seem so petty. So, we can have the attitude that our Lord displayed as he faced death. "For the joy that was set before him," the Lord endured a hideous beating and crucifixion (Hebrews 12:1-3).

I don't know what the Lord might desire of me in terms of life and death. While I will gladly die for Him if the time comes, I am content with living for Him for now.

I think that we should be so mindful of what things believers have endured throughout history and what many still endure elsewhere today. If we did, we might not spend so much time arguing over non-essential doctrinal issues, pointing fingers at or making assumptions about others with whom we disagree on issues that just aren't vital in the scope of Eternity. We might just appreciate one another even more.

We should never lose focus of Eternity. Dallas Holm, the man who used to lead the music during David Wilkerson's meetings, used to say that our standing in Eternity from the verdict on the Day of Judgement will be decided upon what we did with this little thing called "life" that is so very fleeting when compared with the vast expanse called "Eternity." If we were so Eternally minded, we might rethink some of the things that we do with our time.

Re: , on: 2012/5/26 20:31

Heb 11:33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,
34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.
35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:
36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:
37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;
38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.
39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:
40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Re: , on: 2012/5/28 11:14

In The Real World They Say "Identification" - Not Persecution By Betty Crouse

Have you ever sat in a crowded room where more than half the people have been imprisoned because of their faith in Jesus Christ? Having been held in stark prison conditions and dark, backbreaking labor for two to twelve years, Chinese itinerant evangelists traveled, some for hours, to meet with us during our trip to China. They sat on every available space including windowsills, the bed, and the floor in the back room of a tiny apartment tucked away down a cobblestone alley in an isolated Chinese city. However, even the isolation had not allowed them to move about freely. One-by-one or two-by-two to escape police surveillance, they arrived at the apartment.

We also had traveled for hours across "heart-stopping" dangerous, mountainous roads, arriving at our destination at 2 a.m. After many maneuverings the next morning because a co-worker had been taken to the police station for questioning, we arrived at the apartment. One hour later, the room was filled with the evangelists. As they shared their stories, the place truly became hallowed ground for me. I wept as they related their experiences, though they were certainly not asking for sympathy. Their emphasis was on God's triumphant grace. We learned that they do not use our word for persecution in Chinese because it has a negative connotation. They use our word for identification and were quick to point out that identifying with the sufferings of Christ is what they do with JOY!

One of the evangelists was in prison at the time but was able to get a message out. "Don't pray for my release. The police aren't bothering me in here. Already I have led 40 to Christ!"

A husband and wife were among the evangelists. Giving up the opportunity to travel together, in order to reach more people with the Gospel message and spiritual nurture, they only see each other every six months. This small and humble group was itinerating among thousands of people who otherwise would not hear the Gospel. Every testimony was worthy of a gold medal. My tears flowed freely as I pictured these friends and co-workers standing before God's throne and receiving His reward. We left the room as we had come, one-by-one and very carefully to avoid attracting attention. For us it was a rare experience, but for them it was a lifestyle of risking their lives daily for their Lord and Savior.

We learned of others. Just recently in one province alone, 100 pastors were arrested. There is no word of their whereabouts.

We traveled to other groups hidden away in woods or caves in high mountain areas. In the pitch-blackness of night with only stars giving light, we went to the highest mountain ranges I have ever seen. A little Chinese lady helped me put one foot in front of the other and kept me from falling as we made our way up to the top. We went through an iron gate to a stone courtyard leading to five large caves. One cave was the kitchen, another the eating area, two were dormitories, and another was the classroom or workroom. There we found teenagers studying God's Word for five to six hours in the middle of every night. During the daytime, they work in home industry. There weren't any athletic events, TV, or the usual teenage pastimes for them. They were immersing themselves in God's Word. I wondered...are they part of the final generation which will have opportunity to reach their generation for Christ?

On and on, the journey and the experience went like ever-changing scenes etched on my heart. After hearing one young

pastor's stories, we asked him if he thought conditions might improve and there might be less surveillance. He said, "Possibly." He thought for a moment and then quickly replied, "But God may choose to purify His people through suffering. We're ready for that."

When we left that part of the world, I gathered in my mind the kaleidoscope of experiences from sightseeing at the famed Tiennemen Square and Forbidden City to visiting seminary students cloistered from inspectors to become biblically trained, to being spiritually and emotionally touched by incredible stories of Chinese co-workers. The piercing revelation came like a lightning bolt—the persecuted are not lists of names in books or on police records. They are real people with faces, families, emotions, hopes, dreams, and LOVE for Jesus that extends beyond all earthly ties to the eternal vision of His glory, when they will see Him face to face.

As we returned to Indiana, I knew I was leaving a part of the real world where people are imprisoned for their faith, pastors are beaten, families are separated, churches are burned, Bibles are confiscated, living conditions are Spartan, food is for survival—not luxury, economic and political unrest exists, and police surveillance is common. But I saw the political and geographical walls not as boundaries but as borders to be crossed by the power of the Holy Spirit flowing through cleansed, unselfish vessels.

<http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?view=article&aid=28291>

Re: The Coming Great Persecution - Greg Gordon - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2012/5/28 13:20

I'm reminded of something that Josef Tson said;

"This is the new phenomenon that has arrived and it is going to increase," said Tson, president of the Romanian Missionary Society. "But we are the aggressors. God faced evil by sending his Son as the answer to it. Jesus came with three things: truth, love and self-sacrifice. When you are slaughtered, you win the battle ... and you win with these things."

Tson also said,

"When the secret police officer threatened to kill me, to shoot me, I smiled and I said, 'Sir, don't you understand that when you kill me you send me to glory? You cannot threaten me with glory.' He looked at me and said, 'Look, when I threaten to shoot or kill at least get scared. ... You are not normal.'

"I'm not normal," Tson continued. "I am not natural — I am supernatural — because I know that my life is only training for glory. The more suffering, the more troubles, the greater the glory. So, why say, 'Stop this trouble?' Because the more of them the greater the glory up there.

"If you look at things like that," Tson told his seminary audience, "you have the courage to stand the coming persecution in America."

In Christ,

Ron

Re: What they can teach us. - posted by bearmaster, on: 2012/5/29 11:38

The persecuted have much to teach us. For one thing because what they experience they have learned the value of what is important. In one of the preceding posts the account was given where teenagers, teenagers mind you, spend six to seven hours studying God's word training for ministry. This is after working all day in the home industry. These were Chinese young people. They had none of the other distractions that western young people had. They probably were too busy doing the work of Christ when not hiding from the authorities.

It is said the average American spends about 3 to 6 hours in front of the TV. This is not counting internet or the other social media web sites. How much time does the average Christian spend reading or listening to the word. Imagine if one spend three to six hours a day in the word. Good night we might actually see revival.

For some to get a solid hour in the word would be an accomplishment. Next time a KJV debate erupted in this forum I

would like to ask how much time do you spend reading your KJV? If we spent as much time reading our Bibles instead of debating them we would be further along.

Ok. Greg has warned us. Persecution is coming. The Chinese are showing what is important. Now where is my New Testament.

Bearmaster.