



THE PERSECUTION INTENSIFIES

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**We are going to see the trials of the early
post-resurrection church aren't too different
from what we face today**

**From early 1st century society until right now,
the world has done everything in its power
to shame/mock/disparage Christianity**

WE ARE STILL STANDING IN THE GAP!!!!

Acts 5:12-16 King James Version

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

15 Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

What are the reasons for persecution?

1.

SIGNS AND WONDERS

- The world doesn't understand Jesus' saving grace or miraculous healing**
- Miracles show the ignorance and inability of man**

- Miracles show there is a higher being than man, to whom man must submit**
- Miracles disturb people and reminds them of their great need**

2.

GREAT UNITY

**The world fears when we come together for
prayer, and when we are united in
purpose and mission**

Ephesians 2:14 King James Version

14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

Philippians 1:27 King James Version

27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

3.

PUBLIC WORSHIP

**The world fears the loyalty and
commitment of sincere worship**

4.

BEING SEPARATED

AND

DIFFERENT FROM THE WORLD

Our

walk/talk/thoughts/actions/deeds/lifestyle

2 Corinthians 6:17-18 King James Version

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Ephesians 5:11 King James Version

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

5.

**REACHING OUT TO
EVANGELIZE/ATTRACTING
CROWDS**

The world thinks there are multiple ways to reach God

- This gives them a false sense of security, thinking they can do whatever they want and get away with it**
- The idea of one Savior isn't part of their thought process**

Acts 4:12 King James Version

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Acts 11:21 King James Version

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

John 8:24 King James Version

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

Mark 4:31-32 King James Version

31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

Isaiah 9:7 King James Version

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

6.

MEETING THE PHYSICAL

&

SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF MAN

The world feels giving some is enough, not all

→ Full commitment is too scary for most people

WHY?

**BECAUSE IF THEY DID, THEY FEAR THEY
WOULD BE CONVICTED THEMSELVES!!!!**

Luke 9:23 King James Version

23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Luke 14:33 King James Version

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

**REMEMBER, THE BIBLE STATES THE PEOPLE
WERE TRYING TO GET CLOSE TO EVEN
PETER'S SHADOW!!!!**

**HIS SHADOW ALONE WAS POWERED
BY GOD FOR HEALING!!!!**

Matthew 17:20 King James Version

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Matthew 18:19 King James Version

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

Acts 5:17-18 King James Version

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

18 And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

**The persecutors were the religious leaders
of the day.....**

THEY WERE CHURCH PEOPLE!!!!!!

**This was an attempt to silence the apostles
and GOD through:**

→ restraint

→ fright

→ shame

John 15:20 King James Version

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.

John 16:1-4 King James Version

1 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

2 Timothy 3:12 King James Version

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Acts 5:19-21 King James Version

19 But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

21 And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

**GOD ALWAYS CARES
ABOUT
OUR TROUBLING SITUATIONS!!!**

**SOMETIMES, GOD CAN USE YOU AS A
MINISTER DURING YOUR TROUBLING
SITUATION!!!!**

1 Corinthians 10:13 King James Version

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Isaiah 41:10 King James Version

10 Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Hebrews 4:15-16 King James Version

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

**WHAT DID THE ANGEL OF THE LORD TELL
THE APOSTLES TO DO FIRST???**

PREACH!!!!!!

PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE ORDER OF THE ANGEL'S WORDS

GO → IMMEDIATELY

STAND → WITHOUT HESITATION OR RESERVATION

SPEAK → COURAGEOUSLY AND BOLDLY

IS THIS EASY ???

NO!!!!!!

**DIFFICULT ASSIGNMENTS
USUALLY FOLLOW MIRACLES**

**THERE ARE HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES
ASSIGNED TO THOSE WHO'VE HAD
MIRACLES DONE TO THEM**

Titus 2:15 King James Version

15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

2 Timothy 1:8 King James Version

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

1 Peter 3:15 King James Version

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

IS THIS THE END OF THE STORY??? NO

NOT ONLY IS IT NOT THE END.....

THE PERSECUTION INTENSIFIES!!!!!!

Acts 5:21-25 King James Version

21 And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

22 But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned and told,

23 Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within. **24** Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

**The “council” is shocked.....how could
these men escape???**

**Even more shocking.....the apostles
didn't run away like escaped convicts!!**

**THE BEHAVIOR OF TRUE BELIEVERS IN
PERSECUTION WILL ALWAYS CONFUSE
THE PERSECUTORS!!!!**

1 Peter 4:12-13 King James Version

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

1 Peter 5:10 King James Version

10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Acts 5:26 King James Version

26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

Acts 5:26 King James Version

26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

**Note how the Bible makes it point to
note their popularity, just as Jesus' was**

Acts 5:27-28 King James Version

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

The charges brought against the apostles amount to:

→ breaking the law

→ teaching a false doctrine

→ falsely accusing the government of murder

**NOTE HOW THE TRUTH MATTERED
LITTLE TO THESE “LEADERS”**

**HOW LITTLE DO THEY MATTER
TO YOUR PERSECUTORS!!!!**

**THEY HAD KILLED JESUS,
AND
ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT!!!!**

Matthew 27:25 King James Version

25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

**HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND
TO THESE ALLEGATIONS??**

**HOW DID THE APOSTLES
RESPOND???**

Acts 5:29-32 King James Version

29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. **31** Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. **32** And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

**Loyalty and obedience to GOD,
not man**

**Christ died a criminals' death, the one
we deserved (Deut 21:22-23)**

**Jesus is a Prince and Savior who gives
repentance and forgiveness**

**He made the apostles and all of us
witnesses to these things**

Hebrews 2:3-4 King James Version

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

John 15:26-27 King James Version

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

Acts 5:33 King James Version

33 When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.

NOTE THE LANGUAGE IN VERSE 33

**THEY EVIL HEARTS WANTED TO KILL THE
APOSTLES, THERE WAS NO REASON OR
RATIONAL THINKING**

**ONE OF THE 7 SINS THAT GOT HATES!!!!
(HEARTS THAT DEVISETH WICKED PLANS)**

Acts 5:34-42 King James Version

34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;

35 And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.

36 For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. **37** After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:

39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

A new character is introduced: Gamaliel

Who was this man?

- One of the most well respected rabbis and Pharisees
- He was also the teacher of Saul, who became Paul (**Acts 22:3**)

WHAT IS HIS COUNSEL??

WHAT IS HIS COUNSEL??

**GOD EXPOSES THE FAKE AND WILL
NEVER LET THE TRUTH BE DESTROYED!!!**

The disciples are beaten, but not killed

**They felt honor and joy to suffer
for Jesus' name**

Proverbs 29:1 King James Version

29 He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Psalm 32:9-10 King James Version

9 Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

HAS YOUR PERSECUTION INTENSIFIED??

WHO WAS YOU ON TRIAL?

**WILL YOU LET EMOTIONS RUIN
YOUR FAITH??**

**LET THE STORY OF THESE APOSTLES
BE OUR EXAMPLE!!!!**

**LOYALTY AND OBEDIENCE TO GOD WILL
SET YOU FREE FROM YOUR
PERSECUTORS!!!!**



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