

Jesus Will Get You into Trouble¹
Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC
Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr.
September 15, 2024

Text: Luke 21:5-19

Purpose: Jesus is preparing His disciples for the reality of the coming persecution. The Christian life is not necessarily filled with flowery pillows of ease. If you stand for the cause of Christ, you will be an enemy of the world. Beware!

A customer at Gene's Gourmet Grocery marveled at the proprietor's quick wit and intelligence.



"Tell me, Gene, what makes you so smart?"

"Fish heads," says Gene. "You eat enough of them; you'll be positively brilliant."

"You sell them here?" the customer asks. "Yes, they are only \$4 apiece," says Gene.

The customer buys three. A week later, he's back in the store complaining that the fish heads were disgusting and he isn't any smarter.

"You didn't eat enough, " says Gene. The customer goes home with 20 more fish heads. Two weeks later, he's back and this time he's really angry.

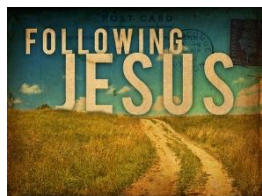


"Hey, Gene," he says, "You're selling me fish heads for \$4 apiece when I just found out I can buy the whole fish for \$2. You're ripping me off!"

"You see?" says Gene. "You're smarter already."²

Growing up, I remember my parents being concerned about who I was associating with. They wanted to know about my friends at school, the people I played with in the neighborhood, and the people I talked with on the telephone. Anytime I went anywhere, they wanted to know where I was going and who I was going to be with. Today, I think the term is called "helicopter parents." They hover over all their kids activities to monitor and protect them from any harm.

Maybe you grew up with parents that were concerned about who you were friends with. There may have been a few people in your neighborhood or at school that your parents warned you to "stay away from that person" because they were "nothing but trouble." They didn't want you hanging out with people that would invite you to experiment with alcohol or drugs, or pressure you to do something risky or illegal. Parents want their children to be around others that will reinforce good activities, neat clean appearance, positive words and deeds, as well as foster academic success.



If you were to look the world over, could you find a better role model to follow than Jesus? Could you find anyone with such noble ideals, good character, and

**Stay Away from
those People Who...**

positive words? Almost every parent would be perfectly satisfied with Jesus as a mentor or friend.

But if you REALLY understood the divine mission of Jesus by His Father, you would find that Jesus is someone that will get you into trouble. Now Jesus is not going to lead a person to steal, act immoral, use alcohol or drugs. But if a person is really obedient to what Jesus teaches, they may find themselves on the outside of what the world considers acceptable and normal. I might even go so far to say, if you are not being alienated because of your faith, it could be you are living closer to what the world teaches instead of what Jesus has taught.



If I were to say Jesus will get you into trouble, it is not simply a warning, rather it is a prediction that faithful followers of Jesus will face persecution. Taking up the cross is a path to persecution. "Following Jesus will get you in trouble" may be a puzzling statement to you. But once we are committed to Him, after Jesus has removed the penalty of our sin and given us the power to overcome the temptations of the world, we will get into a different kind of trouble.

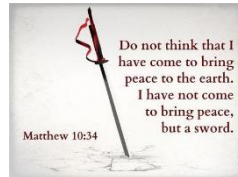
Jesus has given us a clear warning. Just as Jesus was rejected by the world and crucified, those that follow Jesus can expect to suffer a similar kind of rejection. Through the years, I have challenged you to examine your heart so you may be satisfied with a secure relationship with Jesus. You will need that deep assurance of your salvation if you are going to make it through the coming days if you are to stand for the Lord.

Rejecting the World
**The world is
opposed to
everything God
stands for.**

For a few moments this morning, let us examine several ways having a relationship with Jesus can get you into trouble.

I. Jesus Foretold Our Trouble in His Words

The teachings of Jesus can be **compared to a sword**. It is sharp, and it divides.



Jesus said in Matthew 10:34-37, *“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 his father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than*

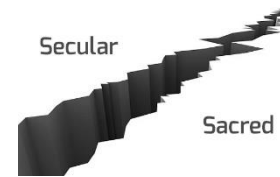


Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.”

These are difficult words, strange words, hard to swallow words coming from the one we call, *“The Prince of Peace.”* These words of Jesus may seem contrary to what we understand Jesus to say. We sing of *“Peace, Peace, Wonderful Peace”* flowing down from the Father above. We sing of the *“Peace Like a River”* and here Jesus is saying we will have conflict and division so bitter it is as if there is a sword dividing us from others.



The peace that passes all understanding comes when we understand our sins have been forgiven by the blood of the Lamb at the cross of Calvary. Once we repent of our sins and acknowledge Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we will have peace with God. But for those that have rejected the offer of salvation, there is no peace with God and thus those that claim to have peace with God will become enemies of those that remain tied to the ways of the world.



Jesus is revealing to His followers that the conflict is real. There is a great divide among the children of God (the sacred things of God) and the children of the world (the secular world system). You may live in a neighborhood or family that has rejected God. If so, you will become the target of ridicule and persecution in those places, if you stand firm on what God’s word teaches is true. You may find yourself at odds with your unbelieving parents, your un-regenerated brothers and sisters, your carnal coworkers, or maybe an unbelieving spouse.

We are called to be peacemakers, helping reconciling others to God, but clearly understand this truth, there may come a time, that hostility may rear its ugly head.

Jesus’ words warned us of the **coming hatred of believers**.

In Luke 6:22, Jesus said, *“Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man’s sake.”*



The passage of scripture we read earlier in Luke 21:17 said, *“And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake.”*

This is also echoed in I John 3:13, *“Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.”*

Jesus is telling us in advance, we will face being ostracized and persecuted as we live out faithful Christian lives in a world that has rejected Him.

Jesus’ words gave us **clear notice of persecution.**



As Jesus concluded the Beatitudes in Matthew (5:10-12), he said, *“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you*

when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

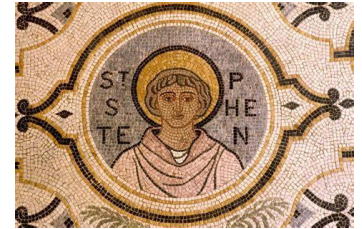
Jesus is saying if we live as we should, don’t be surprised if the world persecutes you. In fact, you can expect it. There are fundamental differences and expectations between Christians and non-Christians and the way they live.

II. This Principle Can Be Illustrated in the life of People

This principle can be illustrated in the life of Christians who have walked their faith and faced persecution.

Consider the Life of Stephen (Acts 6:8-8:2)

You may remember one of the earliest deacons in the church was a man named Stephen. Out of all of the members of that church, he was among the seven who were chosen to be deacons. The scripture says he was honest of good report, and filled with the Holy Spirit. You would think anybody would appreciate having a young man like him around. But this young deacon went out to witness, and when he spoke a word to the crowds about Jesus he drew such opposition that his very life was imperiled. Such anger was raised against Stephen that they stoned him outside the gate of Jerusalem.

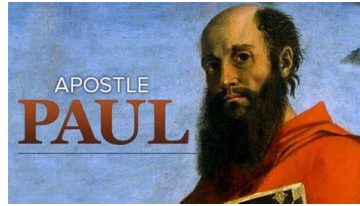


If you were to go outside the eastern wall of the old city of Jerusalem, pass by the place of the New Testament-era gate known as the “Sheep Gate,” (renamed “St. Stephen’s Gate.”) and walk another 100 yards to the south. There you will find a shrine erected in the Kidron valley, between the old Jerusalem wall, and the new road to Bethlehem, commemorating the day a man whose only guilt was preaching about Jesus who was taken outside this wall by people as religiously zealous as Saul of Tarsus and stoned to death.

What Stephen stood for so clashed with what others stood for that their reaction was to silence him by stoning.

Consider the Life of the Apostle Paul

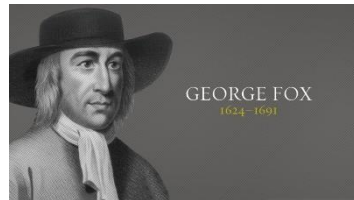
This man is the one who consented to the stoning of Stephen, later Saul had an encounter with the Lord on the road to Damascus and his name was changed to Paul. He became one of the key church leaders, proclaiming the gospel throughout the known area. He was transformed into a disciple of Jesus, and met similar persecution to that of Stephen.



The history of Paul finds him clashing with his own people, drawing the rebuke of his fellow Jews, the rebuke of the religious leaders, and the wrath of Roman rulers. The history of Paul is a legacy of imprisonment, stoning, and beatings. And what was Paul's guilt? He was guilty of being a Christian. What he proclaimed clashed so much with the world, that the world sentenced him to die. Many believed Paul was beheaded in Rome.

Consider the Life of George Fox

He was the founder of the Society of Friends, or Quakers. He was a shoemaker. About the age of nineteen, George felt the divine call to preach, which took him across the country alone as a preacher. George Fox set off in a new direction which clashed with many religious leaders because of his devout beliefs, causing quite a stir, and it led to his frequent imprisonment as disturber of the peace. About 1650 he had gathered a group who became known as Quakers. George Fox endured prison and beatings, but he maintained his spiritual convictions, being illuminated by an "Inner Light."



The soldiers of King Charles once said of George Fox, that he was "as still as a tree and as pure as a bell." And this was a tribute from his enemies.

Consider the Life of John Bunyan

John Bunyan was a Baptist preacher in England in the seventeenth century, when Baptists were considered nonconformists and received ridicule and harsh treatment from the Anglican Church. He was a tinker by trade, and his education was limited mostly to the English Bible, which he knew very well. He was not very orthodox as a Baptist, but in his fundamental beliefs he was a Baptist. He was more concerned with being a Christian. But because of his preaching in those hostile days, and in his clash with the established church, John Bunyan spent some thirteen years in prison. His only crime was the preaching of the gospel. While he was in prison he wrote one of three classics, the best-known being "Pilgrim's Progress," a book which at one time had been translated into more languages than any other book except the Bible itself.



Persecution has been the expected reaction to a Christian life. Even so, the Church has been strengthened through the persecutions which have come during the centuries. As has been said, "The blood of the martyrs has become the seed of the church." Alexander MacLaren said, "The coals were scattered from the hearth in Jerusalem by the armed heel of violence. That (persecution) did not put the fire out, but only spread it, for wherever they were flung they kindled a blaze."

Consider the Life of Jesus

It is hard to imagine how anyone as good as Jesus, could have received anything from people but the highest of praise and affection. But His effect on people, then and now, caused them either to react to Him with all-out devotion or total rejection. What Jesus stood for so clashed with the people of His day, that they even went so far as to say He was doing the work of the devil. The religious leaders came to a crossroads and either had to embrace Him as the Savior or crucify Him. They chose to crucify Him. Just as Jesus was falsely accused, many of the disciples of Jesus have faced a similar fate.



III. The Principle Can Be Illustrated in Life

The principle is that Jesus will get you into trouble. As disciples of His we are committed to an eternal order and a higher kingdom, while at the same time living in this world, and being obligated as citizens of whatever country in which we may live. Though we live in this world, we are not citizens of this world. Our loyalty lies with the Lord and not this world system. So by following Jesus, we will get in trouble with the world. Being a faithful follower will get you into trouble in several ways.

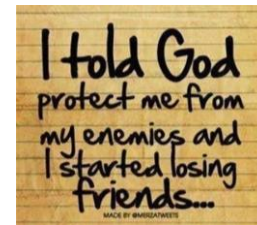
1. You will get in trouble with **your conscience**.

Determining the rights and wrongs of life is not easy. As an unbeliever, you simply make decisions based upon what is good for you. But as a Christian



you will have to struggle with your ever-present conscience to know what to do. A Christian will struggle with their conscience as they seek to do what is right in the sight of Christ, which may be contrary to your own selfish desires.

2. It will get you in trouble with **your friends**.



Just as Jesus said there would be conflict between your family members, conflict will arise between you and your friends. When a person decides to put the things of God first, when your loyalty to God supersedes your family or friends, conflict will come. A woman once asked Dwight L. Moody about her as a Christian having to give up the world, and various forms of questionable entertainment. Mr. Moody responded to say that “she would not have to give the world up, but that if she were committed to Christ, the world would give her up.” He was simply saying that if she were absolutely dedicated to Christ the world would turn away from her.

3. Dedication to Christ will get you in trouble **with culture**.

Being loyal to an eternal kingdom, a Christian who follows Jesus will be constantly getting into trouble concerning issues of the day. He will be applying his Christian loyalty and Christian principles to controversial issues, such as war, law enforcement, politics, human rights, and education. More recent volatile issues such as abortion and human sexuality can quickly divide a room full of people. But as a



Christian, you are obligated to stand for eternal values and to be faithful to Christ and His word.

Have you ever noticed how a stream of water flowing through the countryside takes on the color of the soil in which it flows? A Christian cannot absorb the attitudes of our culture as other people do. He must seek to know the mind of Christ, and seek to be a Christian first and foremost, even if it means cutting across the grain of contemporary society.

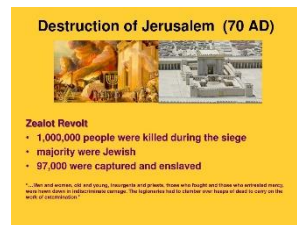


This does not mean that he will practice civil disobedience, or that he will have license to be rude and unkind toward other people. It will mean that he will be committed to do the will of Christ, and that he will seek to influence others in a manner which will bring credit to Christ. It is much easier to become a Christian, but it is not easy to live as a Christian. It is a life-long pilgrimage. That is why we are admonished to “take up our cross daily.” A Christian should not be surprised when being faithful to their beliefs they encounter opposition.

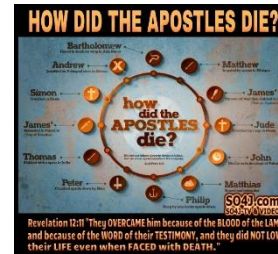
Prepare Your Hearts

Jesus predicted accurately what was going to happen in just a few short years. Jesus was giving his disciples some last-minute preparation for the coming of the end of the ages.

- He told them the temple would be destroyed and not one stone would be left standing. About 30 years after Jesus’ crucifixion, in 70 AD the Romans came and completely leveled Jerusalem.

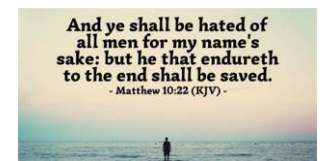


- Jesus told them that there would be deceivers to come claiming to be the Messiah – He said, don’t believe them. Ever since, there have been thousands of individuals claiming to be God’s revelation to mankind – all of them have been false.
- Jesus told them kingdom would rise against kingdom – and history has revealed this to be true.
- He predicted earthquakes, pestilences and fearful signs – and we know Pompeii was completely destroyed by a volcano about the time Jerusalem was destroyed.



- Jesus told his disciples they would be put in prison and would have to face kings and rulers because of their faith in Jesus Christ. All but one of the disciples died a martyr’s death.
- Throughout the centuries, Christians of various faith traditions have confronted their culture with Biblical truth and paid for their testimony with their blood. Jesus told them, they would be hated, and some would die for their faith.

Jesus assured them, they would not be lost. Through their perseverance, their soul would be preserved. (v. 17)



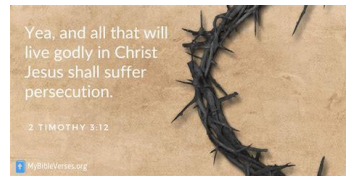
I don’t know what lies ahead for us. Right now, we are blessed to live in a country where we are free to worship, assemble, pray, and preach God’s word without any interference from our government – for now. There are places in this world today where assembling like we are today would invite imprisonment, beatings, or death. There are places in the world where if you convert to Christianity,

you will be rejected by your family and considered as dead. For a person to convert from an intolerant, dogmatic faith like Islam to Christianity would be a death sentence. For Christians to gather and pray in Myanmar would invite



arrest. To build a church in Iran or Saudi Arabia would invite a bonfire quickly. To go and minister in the name of Jesus in Afghanistan has caused missionaries to lose their lives.

Our Christian faith here in America is way too comfortable. Many preach about the blessings of God – which is true. We have been given grace and forgiveness for our sins.



We have been adopted into the family of God. But the thing Jesus warned us about was the conflict we would have with the world if we REALLY lived out our faith. The measure of our Christianity may well be the amount of persecution we draw upon ourselves.

I've come today to warn you, Jesus will get you into trouble!

Are you ready?

LET US PRAY

Notes:

¹ Outline from Ray K. Hodge sermon based on the same title using the text: Matthew 10:34-37

²Mickey's Funnies, A Smart Funny, Sept. 5, 2024 (forwarded by Gretchen Patti)