

Christian Persecution

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon emphasizes the inevitable persecution Christians face when fulfilling their mission to proclaim the gospel and call others to repentance.

Scripture: Matthew 10:24, John 15:18

Topics: "Christian Persecution", "Religious Freedom"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the inevitable persecution and hatred that Christians face when fulfilling the true mission of Christ in a lost world. It delves into the challenging aspects of the mission, which involves confronting people's self-righteousness, calling for repentance, and highlighting the need for full surrender to Christ. The sermon also sheds light on the persecution faced by Christians in various countries around the world, where religious freedom is limited, and believers are oppressed for their faith.

Transcript

Jesus said, if the world hates you, you know it hated me before it hated you. The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

You see, the church and every true Christian, every true believer is hated because of our mission. I want to talk to you about the mission of the church and show you why if you truly obeying the true mission of Christ to a lost world, you're going to be marked. You're going to be persecuted on the job, you're going to be persecuted in the church, and the time will come, the closer we get to fulfilling God's mission in New York, when you mention Times Square Church, you're going to people see their eyebrows go up.

Oh, that church? Because you see, we're going to be taking a stand against the powers of darkness, as we've never taken it before, and all hell's going to get angry, and everyone is walking with the enemy, and the rejecter of Jesus Christ is going to be an enemy. You're going to find enemies on the job, you're going to find enemies everywhere, because you are fulfilling the mission. Now let me talk about this mission, and some of you are going to be a little horrified by what I'm saying.

You're going to draw back and say, well, wait a minute, that's too strong. But what is my mission as a pastor? What is your mission as a witness for Jesus Christ? It's more than going out and just telling people Jesus loves you. It's more than trying to give people examples of how much you suffer, so they'll have pity on you, so they'll listen to your gospel.

Oh, my mother just died, and I'm feeling a little sad, but I want to tell you how Jesus can comfort. It's more than that. That's fine, but it goes far beyond that.

Our mission is to take from ungodly men that which is dearest to their heart, their self-righteousness. You're commissioned to go and tell men who have spent a lifetime believing that they're doing good and that they're achieving something. I'm kind to my family, and I'm kind to people, and they spent a lifetime building up what they believe is integrity, and you come along and tell them it's filthy rags.

You come to translate people out of the kingdom of darkness into a kingdom of light, that kingdom of light that they think is nothing but bondage and suffering. You're taking away from their freedom. More than that, you've been sent to execute them, to kill them.

What do you think if people come in and they hear us talk about dying to the world and dying to sin, being crucified? You say, wait a minute. Isn't that our mission? Isn't this our mission to show them that you have to die to sin and to self-will and to self-independence, and you come along and they have spent their lifetime killing their conscience, searing it and silencing a voice, and you come along with the voice louder than their conscience and say without Christ and say it as lovingly as you can, say with tears in your eyes, but you are speaking a voice louder than their conscience, and they have spent a lifetime achieving this false peace, and you come along saying, without being born again, you're a rebel. To you, to them, you're an executioner.

You come to kill them. All this time, I've been okay. All this time, I know I've been through this, and folks, they have built their own tower of babble of self-confidence.

They have an idolatry of a Christ they've created in their own mind who's just like them, and you come along and talk about another kind of Christ, a Christ who demands full surrender. You come along and you speak these things to the world. Folks, you better have the Holy Ghost with you.

You better be speaking the mind of God. There are people who are praising themselves that they're not so bad. Here you come saying all your goodness is an abomination in the eyes of God that you've achieved in your own flesh, in your own works.

Here comes a Christian. Here comes a path. They come into church.

How many people walk into this church, and they have finally come to a place where they believe God admires them now. I'm not so bad. I'm too good for hell.

Maybe not quite ready for heaven, but I'm getting there very fast. Then they come in and sit and hear a man say, unless you're born again, you can't enter the kingdom of heaven. Folks, think of what a mission is, and how the world perceives that mission.

There are millions of people filling our church pews today, kicking there in God's good graces, and they hear a message. They hear a message that comforts them. We come along and we preach repentance and life change.

We preach that self-made integrity is not acceptable to God, that rather than they be in God's favor, God's wrath is upon those who will not receive his loving call to surrender all to him. We come along preaching the blood of Christ and separation from the world. We talk about submission and obedience to the word of God, and they can't conceive.

Jesus said, I've chosen you out of the world, and that strikes at the heart of why we are hated. He said, I've chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you for this reason. They hate you because I called you out of their condition.

I called you out of their fellowship. I called you out. And not only did I call you out, I sent you to call everybody else out.

Each year, Open Doors assembles the World Watch List to focus the world's attention on places where religious freedom is limited, where persecution occurs. The list includes the 50 most oppressive places in the world for Christians to live. The purpose is to enable followers of Jesus around the world to unite in prayer, advocacy, assistance, and encouragement for suffering believers.

Let me tell you about the top 10 countries on the World Watch List for 2010. Number 10, Uzbekistan. Here, it is illegal to tell people about Jesus or import religious material.

Media campaigns against Christians are widespread, and many are forced to leave their homes due to threats by their communities. Number nine, Laos. Christians here are under strict government surveillance.

Communities apply severe pressure to anyone who abandons the worship of evil spirits. Number eight, Mauritania. Converting to Christianity is forbidden here.

The government is increasing the pressure on Christians through threats of imprisonment or death. They're seeking to eliminate the gospel's presence and impact. Number seven, Yemen.

Islam is the state religion. No one is allowed to convert from this religion. Disobeying this law brings severe opposition and possible death from authorities and extremists.

Number six, Afghanistan. Christians must remain hidden here. If they are discovered, they face the loss of their family, home, and job.

They are beaten, imprisoned, and often killed. Number five, Maldives. All citizens must embrace Islam.

If anyone converts to another religion, they face the loss of citizenship. The government believes this severe law promotes national unity and retains their control on these islands. This is the least evangelized country in the world.

Number four, Somalia. Islam is the state religion here as well. There is no religious freedom.

Christians have been kidnapped, raped, and killed in 2009. Converts who are allowed to live become family outcasts and practice their faith in secret under extremely dangerous conditions. Number three, Saudi Arabia.

Non-Muslim public worship is forbidden. Disobedience brings arrest, flogging, and deportation. Christians risk death threats and honor claims.

Number two, Iran. According to a new law, converts to Christianity face a mandatory death sentence. House churches are monitored by secret police and members are often arrested, questioned, and beaten.

Number one, North Korea. Everyone is required to worship the leaders, Kim Jong-il and his father. The regime believes their power will collapse if they fail to stop the spread of Christianity.

When Christians are discovered, they are sent to deadly labor camps or secretly executed. You can learn more about helping Christians who are persecuted in these and other countries by visiting Open Door's website.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/MJIHzHtNisQ.mp4>

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