

# When Persecution Comes to America and the West

by E.A. Johnston

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*To prepare for persecution, we must walk closely with God, have a strong faith, and rely on the Holy Spirit.*

**Duration:** 7:10

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:11, Matthew 8:20, Matthew 24:16-18, John 14:26, Acts 2:42, Romans 8:26, Philippians 3:10, 2 Timothy 2:3, Hebrews 3:15

**Topics:** "Persecution", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the need to learn from the house church in China, which reflects the early church in Acts and operates without man-made traditions, allowing the Holy Spirit to work freely. It highlights the importance of spiritual preparation for potential persecution, including memorizing scripture, establishing safe meeting places, and being ready to flee if necessary. The message stresses the significance of relying on the Holy Spirit, being mentally prepared to lose everything, and enduring hardships as a good soldier of Christ.

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## Transcript

Well, here are some things we can learn from the house church in China. The Chinese church is basically a composite of the church in the book of Acts. They have returned to the apostolic model.

We need to do the same. Our man-made traditions obstruct the work of the Holy Spirit and obstruct the original. We in the West are more concerned with form rather than function, ritual more than spiritual.

We are trapped in our rituals and our traditions of men. They are free to serve Christ because they have no entanglements as we do. The house church is indigenous and no denomination or mission board controls it and therefore it has more freedom.

To be armed with this knowledge of the church in China is to be prepared here in the West to see how the church in China has suffered and is suffering is to better equip ourselves mentally, emotionally, and spiritually for the common persecution. To walk closely with God now means to be better prepared then. When persecution comes, our faith will be tested.

I will say this, when persecution comes to America and the West, as a believer, the only ones who will get through are those who have a close walk with God and a vital daily faith and a strong prayer life and a

reliance upon the Holy Spirit. If you do not have that kind of life now, don't expect to get it magically. When persecution comes, you will fall, you will fail.

Satan will have his way with you. You must prepare yourself now. It's only your strong faith and vital prayer life that'll get you through that time.

So how can we prepare ourselves for the coming persecution in our country? I have a few suggestions, which I hope will be helpful. Begin to memorize as much scripture as you can. If you go to jail, you won't have a Bible sitting there.

There'll be no Gideon Bible there. Bibles will be taken away. Your cell phone will be taken away from you.

All you have is your memory. And if your memory isn't full of scripture, you'll be in pretty bad shape. I highly recommend reading the book, *The Heavenly Man* by Brother Young.

I have learned much from that book. It showed me a lot about what he went through, what he had to rely on scripture to get him through those hard times. He would not have made it any other way.

Well, prepare for the persecution by choosing a safe house or a safe room to meet to avoid detection. Pick a place in your community. Pick a place on your property where you can hide and hide other believers from the authorities, where you can meet undetected and hold services.

Be prepared to change the meeting of the location at a moment's notice to avoid detection by authorities. You may wish to attend the meetings by arriving at night and staggering the times of your arrival so that a large group doesn't show up at once. You may wish to arrive by bicycle so you can hide your bike in the bushes.

If you choose to drive, you may want a carpool and park several blocks away so not to draw attention to yourself. Hey, I know this sounds crazy to us now, but if tremendous persecution comes to America, this will be sound advice. Get a passport for every member of your family.

If you are forced to leave this country, if you don't have a passport, how will you get out? How will you get your children out? God is a global God. He may move you to Germany during that time to be a witness for him or to another country. You better be prepared to be on the go for God when he decides to move you.

Be prepared for anything. Prepare your heart for the coming persecution through a complete reliance upon the Holy Spirit in all things. Live in the center of the will of God now so you will be able to survive in the center of his will then.

When persecution comes, we must pay attention to the warning in Hebrews, harden not your hearts as in the provocation. We must be careful saints when trials come in the time of persecution, not to grumble, not to harden our hearts. When we lose everything, I cannot stress the importance of that because that will do damage to the cause of Christ.

We must heed the admonition of scripture while it is called today, harden not your hearts. We must keep looking at him through the fire of persecution. That is critically important too.

Our eyes must be on Jesus throughout. Be prepared mentally. And this is gonna be so hard for us here in the West who have accumulated so much through the years and through our lives.

But listen, dear friends, those of you, everyone listening to me within the sound of my voice, be prepared mentally to lose everything you have materially, your home, your savings, your vehicles, everything, all may be confiscated as an enemy of the state. Be prepared to see your loved ones suffer pain, estrangement, loneliness, and want. Be prepared mentally for hardships.

Second Timothy says to endure hardship as a good soldier. A soldier gets accustomed to sleeping on the hard ground with no pillow. Jesus said, foxes have holes, birds of the air have nests.

The son of man has nowhere to lay his head. And be prepared to live in hard, harsh conditions. Think of Corrie Ten Boom in that German concentration camp where she saw her father die, her sister die.

She didn't have anything. She didn't have anything but Christ. And one day it was so hard for her.

She said, Jesus, I can't do it anymore. And he said, sister, dear one, dear child, look down at your hand. And she looked at her hand and holding her hand was a nail pierced hand.

And that got her through. That will get you through times that we can't even imagine. God was with her in her trial and God will be with you in your trial, friend.

He will see you through as in Philippians 3.10, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings being made conformable unto him.

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