

Preparing the Body of Christ for Persecution

by Edgar Reich

This sermon focuses on preparing the body of Christ for persecution, drawing examples from real-life stories of believers facing extreme challenges for their faith. It emphasizes the certainty of persecution, the purposes behind it, the privilege and promises of enduring persecution, the presence of Christ during trials, the perseverance required, and the preparation needed to stand firm in the face of opposition.

Scripture: Matthew 24:9, 2 Timothy 3:12, Acts 8:1, Matthew 5:10, Deuteronomy 31:6, 2 Corinthians 12:9, 1 Peter 4:12, Romans 8:18, Joshua 24:15, Acts 4:19

Topics: "Perseverance in Faith", "Enduring Persecution"

Description

This sermon focuses on preparing the body of Christ for persecution, drawing examples from real-life stories of believers facing extreme challenges for their faith. It emphasizes the certainty of persecution, the purposes behind it, the privilege and promises of enduring persecution, the presence of Christ during trials, the perseverance required, and the preparation needed to stand firm in the face of opposition.

Transcript

Help us to follow what you want to say to us, and we ask this in Christ's holy name. Amen. Preparing the body of Christ for persecution.

A young woman was washing her clothes in a North Korea river. As she gathered her clothes, a little book fell from her clothes. It fell to the ground.

Another person saw it, looked at the book, and reported her. It was either a Christian book, or it was a Bible. She was reported to the authorities.

She was then incarcerated. She was investigated, and her father, a 60-year-old father, was also arrested several months later, and we believe there was also torture involved. Several months later, there was a public show trial, and police officers were assembled, seven of them with guns, and the surrounding people were invited to come and see what would happen.

There was a nearby public school. There was a nearby high school. The children from those schools were asked to come and watch, and as this young woman and her father stood before them, they were accused of a capital offense of treason, and then these seven police officers raised their rifles and shot each one of them three times, and blood and brain matter scattered all over.

Please turn with me to the text for preparing ourselves for persecution. Matthew chapter 24, verses 9 to 13. Matthew chapter 24, verses 9 to 13.

Then they will deliver you up to tribulation, and do what? And do what? Kill you, and you will be what? Not everyone is going to love us. By all nations, for my name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many, and because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will do what? But he who endures to the end shall be saved. Beloved, will your love grow cold when there's opposition? Will your love grow cold when not everyone agrees with you? Will your love grow cold of the Lord when someone hurts you? Will your love grow cold, and will you disbelieve then the promises of God? God forbid! The disciples had asked the Lord Jesus Christ in this passage, what will be the sign of your coming? Such signs included persecution and the great tribulation. There are over 60 countries now today where the cross of Jesus Christ is no longer welcome.

The United States of America is in the process of joining such countries. I would like to cover seven points this morning about persecution. There are seven Ps, and I will use the letter P to help us remember.

Number one, persecution is certain. Number two, what are the purposes of persecution? Why does God allow it? The privilege of persecution. The promises of God during persecution.

The presence of Christ during persecution. Praise God. You're not alone.

You're never alone. Praise God. Number six, perseverance of the saints to the end with patience, forgiveness, and love.

Praise God. And then point number seven, preparation for persecution. The first point I mentioned was that persecution is certain also in America and Canada.

The passage we read in Matthew foretells a worldwide persecution where true Christians are persecuted, perhaps tortured and killed and hated for the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. Jesus did not tell the disciples, his followers, in this passage, you will be exempted from such persecution. Oh, no.

Jesus does not even say here, you will be raptured so you don't have to face this. There's nothing in this passage, beloved. He said you will even face the abomination of desolation in Matthew chapter 24, verse 15.

It refers to a coming world leader. It refers to Antichrist. We don't know whether that will be the first, second, third, or fourth world leader, but one of them will be Antichrist.

Again, Jesus does not say in this passage that we will be raptured or that we will be saved from such persecution. In America, we have these feelings. This can never happen here.

What are you talking about? God is love. Of course, God is love. He is such a loving God, and we will find out why it is even love that we're persecuted.

In 2 Timothy 3, 12, it says, yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ, Jesus will suffer persecution. Persecution. You might say, well, I have not been persecuted yet, praise God.

May I ask you, why not? May I ask you, why not? Are you perhaps not living the godly life that Scripture is speaking about? After I got saved, I put my Bible on the side desk of my office desk, and the vice-chairman walked in, and he said, what is this? Are you out of your mind? You believe this kind of? And I won't tell you all of the words that were spoken. And the Holy Spirit said, be quiet, say nothing. Just be quiet.

And he went into a tirade against God, and the Word of God, and myself. But you know, the wonderful thing is that later on, when we asked to have a Bible study in that corporation, inside the corporation, he was the man who would approve this or disapprove us having a Christian fellowship inside that company. You know, the wonderful thing that happened is that God moved his heart so that we were able to have that fellowship, beloved.

I got a call from a friend who said, come and street preach with us in New York. I said I would pray about it. I'm called for revival.

I don't really think I'm into street ministry, dear brother Jose. That didn't appeal to me too much. And so as I prayed, to my surprise, the Holy Spirit said, yes, go! And I prayed a second time.

I said, Lord, I... Lord, I heard you wrong. What am I supposed to do? Go! And I said, Lord, about serious decisions, I always pray three times. What am I supposed to do, Lord? Go! I went with Silas Titus and some other brothers.

They had fasted for 40 days. We went out on the streets of New York. We went at ground zero.

I was standing there and passing out tracts. You know, the New Yorkers are pretty hard. Aren't they, brother Jose? And you know, as people were walking by me, they were cursing at me.

Quietly. And then for the rest of the day, there were many who cursed. I asked my fellow Christians and they said no, it didn't happen to them.

You see, Satan knew there was pride in me. And so at the end of the day, I said, God, they don't want you. And they don't want me.

They think I'm out of my mind. I'm looked at as a terrorist. I moved around.

I'm shoved about. The police moves me around. Lord, Lord, they don't want me.

And then on the weekend, the Holy Spirit convicted me and the Holy Spirit came and asked me, do you really love people? And I said, well, yes, of course, God, I love people. Well, what about the people that oppose you a little? And so God convicted me mightily on that weekend. And so I prayed and I said, now Lord, break my heart.

Show me your love for people that I might know, that I might understand. And on Tuesday of the following week, I was standing at ground zero. It was 4.30, 10 to 20,000 people were rushing towards me.

And all of a sudden, all sound disappeared. I couldn't hear the people. I couldn't hear the noise from ground zero.

And the people were starting to walk towards me in slow motion. And so I had no sound and in slow motion. And I was looking and I didn't understand.

And then I saw on their faces, I saw, I saw their need for money. I saw their need for pleasure. I saw their need to get home.

I saw them wanting to be in their pools. I saw them wanting to have their drinks. I saw them wanting to, to have their cars, to have their family, to have their friends.

But there was no need for God in their faces. Yet God says, I love them. And as I looked at them, I realized I was looking at the walking dead beloved.

I was looking at the walking dead and my heart started to break and to weep. My heart was breaking and weeping. I had no tears yet in my eyes, but my heart was breaking and weeping.

And then all sound came back. The people were walking normally. And God, the Holy Spirit said in my heart, their blood will I require from your hand if you don't tell them.

Their blood. I love them. Why don't you love them? You call yourself a Christian? Jesus said, why do you call me Lord, Lord? You raise holy hands, Lord, Lord.

But why don't you do as I say? Why don't you do what the Bible says? Oh, beloved. Oh, beloved. I went back out and another time we went out onto the Staten Island Ferry.

And the night before I had a dream that I would be stabbed by a Muslim and I would be thrown over the Staten Island Ferry. And I prayed and I said, Lord, if the dream is from you, it's all right. I'm going to go.

I'm going to share the good news on the Staten Island Ferry. Nothing happened that day. Satan tried to prevent me from going.

I don't know what will happen in the future, but it's all right. It's okay. You see, the number one cause of persecution is witnessing with your mouth.

You say, well, I live my life good. That's great. That's wonderful.

Live it good. But in John chapter 17, Jesus prayed for them to be one as you, Father, and I are one. And for those to be one that will hear through their words.

So you've got to add some words, beloved. Let them know the truth. Let them know the truth.

In one of the worst Iranian prisons, a leader of a Christian group was told, if you stop witnessing, we will let you all go. The Christian thought about it and answered, how can we deny such great, great, great, great salvation? Did you know your salvation is great and incredible? We live in a country where salvation means virtually nothing. We push it aside.

We don't want it, say people on the streets. Even we as Christians have been affected by humanism and secularism. We do not understand the greatness of God and what he has done.

That divinity came to rescue humanity, beloved. A great, incredible God, the Son of God, gave his life so that we might live. What a wonderful, wonderful truth that is.

And so, beloved, much has gone wrong in our respective countries in North America because we do not witness. Persecution has now started in the United States and Canada. Certain parts of the Bible are considered inflammable.

Laws have been changed to permit gross sin. Please listen to this. Committed Christians are now classified with terrorists in the United States of America.

The official policy of Homeland Security and the FBI is that committed Christians are classified as a danger to this country. You are classified with terrorists in the United States. Now, we must pray for our leadership, but I also must tell you that President Obama appears to admit that he is a Muslim.

And I believe that you can watch part of this on a YouTube video. It's called Obama Admits He Is a Muslim. You can watch that.

Now, the words he spoke were in Arabic, so I could not understand them, so I do not know. But if you speak Arabic, perhaps you could check and let me know if it's true. But this video is well worth watching because it tells you about another faith.

But God has placed this man in charge of this country, so you pray for him. You don't oppose him. You pray for him that God might intercede because in all of the prayers, in the New Testament, in the Book of Acts, in the Gospels, in the letters, there's not a single prayer against their leadership.

Not a single prayer, beloved. So as Christians, we will love unconditionally. We will do what the government says we must do, but we will not do it if it's against his word.

The second point is the purposes of persecution. Why does God allow it? Now, beloved, God loves mankind so very, very much. And guess who he has left as witnesses? Are you a witness? You're supposed to be.

Now, if God wants to convict those that do not yet believe, even persecutors, even those that are against Christians, whom might he use as a witness? Us, you, and me. It is a testimony of our faith in God and his Son, Jesus Christ. It is, the purpose of it is new growth of others receiving salvation.

Here's another story from North Korea. A soldier was watching as a construction crew, which was also composed of soldiers, they found a building, demolished it, and they found a Bible in that building. And with the Bible, there was also a list of 25 names.

And as they followed up on those 25 names, they accumulated a pastor, two assistant pastors, two elders, and 20 Christians. They assembled them at the construction site. They brought in steam rollers, and they told those leaders, Now, if you do not worship Kim Il-sung, and if you do not worship Kim Jong-il, you will die.

And beloved, that is also a picture of Antichrist in the future. That is what heroes say. If you don't worship me, you will die.

But beloved, this you will die is only in a temporal sense. It's not for eternity, because we do not put our faith in our circumstances, but we put our faith in a loving and wonderful, incredible God. And so God made it as a testimony that these Christians, some of these Christians should be killed.

And five of them, the leaders, had to lie on the pavement. And then the steam rollers came and rolled over them. And as their heads popped and made a popping sound, many of the Christians fainted and fell to the ground.

But you know, there was new growth. There was new growth, because that soldier who watched, he became a Christian. And so the blood of the martyrs drenched the ground, but there was new growth.

Christian Bishop Polycarp lived A.D. 69 to 155. He was a second-century Christian bishop of Smyrna. Now, if you remember, Christ had talked to the church of Smyrna and had told them, Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer.

This is Christ speaking through the Apostle John. And he's saying, Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested. And you will have tribulation ten days.

Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. The crown of life forevermore, and a great reward. It is not the temporal, but the eternal.

It is not the now, but the forever, sisters and brothers. And so we need not worry, because Christ is with us. Christ is for us.

Christ is in us. He says, I'll never leave you, nor forsake you, whatever you have to go through. And so this bishop, Christian bishop Polycarp, he died as a martyr.

He was bound and burned at the stake, but the fire would not touch him. The fire wouldn't burn him. So finally they went over and they stabbed him to death.

In Smyrna, the execution of Christians became so great that hundreds of them were martyred at the same time. Yet when the people saw the martyrdom of the Christians and how they behaved in their faith, others became saved. Praise God.

And those who had not believed outnumbered those that were being martyred. And they had to stop martyring people because so many people got saved. Isn't that wonderful? You give your life for someone else to have life.

Isn't that an act of love on your part? You know, you can start that now. You can put the old flesh to death. You can do as our brother Jose said.

Give words of life to others. Love them. Love them.

The second point for the reason why God permits persecution. It refines us and tests us. You see, when we are in prison, we no longer have time to sin.

Isn't that wonderful? When you're all alone, you look to whom? From whence comes my help? My help comes from the Lord. Praise God. You have time with him.

You have time alone with him. Wow, nobody to disturb you. Wow! And it tests also your faith.

Are you true in the faith? Will you ask yourself, am I really true in the faith? Two Russian soldiers came to a little church in the middle of winter in Russia. And inside the church were about 12 people worshipping God. The door burst open and two soldiers standing there with two submachine guns.

They walked in and they said, Now you Christians, we're going to kill you if you don't leave this place of worship. They stood in the middle with their two machine guns. Slowly six people got up and walked out of the church.

One of the soldiers went after them and closed the door behind them. And then he came back into the auditorium. And then both soldiers laid down their weapons.

And they said to the other six, now beloved sisters and brothers, We both are Christians too. But we only felt like worshipping with two Christians today. Are you a true Christian? Would you give your life for someone else that he might live? And then C, persecution helps us to witness.

The third point. There are many more points, but let us just have three points to remember why. Acts 8.1.4 says, At that time a great persecution rose against the church, which was at Jerusalem.

And they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. So Acts 8.1. They were all scattered. Now in verse 4 it says, Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere doing what? Preaching the word.

Preaching the word. A very surprising outcome, sisters and brothers. Preaching the word.

Why preaching the word? They were scattered. Do you know what scattered means? You lose all of your stuff. You lose all of your possessions.

You lose your job, your house, your family, all of your surrounding friends. You can no longer stay there. You must leave.

You're gone. You don't know what you're going to eat next day. And you're scattered.

And here they start to witness. To witness about the greatness of God. Does God have to scatter us first before we share the truth of this great salvation? Perhaps.

Because we're so stubborn. And we're so selfish. And we say, why should I do what others don't do? Brother Muniz said that only 1% have read their Bible.

It's about 1% that witness faithfully and regularly. Perhaps it's 10% here. I hope it's more.

But I believe the large majority of you are not witnessing regularly. We were out with Sister Mary Beth. She takes care of the administrative things here.

We were with her on the streets of Atlanta. And we just had a marvelous time yesterday morning before we came to the conference. And there's some of my brothers and sisters sitting over here who were on the streets.

That we might give the Word of God to those who are lost. And it's often easier if you go with two rather than doing it always on your own. So find a friend.

Find a loved one. Say, we resolve together. We're going to do this once a week perhaps.

And then even as Brother Mark said, wherever you go, you can be a witness by yourself as well. Now we come to the privilege of persecution, the third point. It is a cause of rejoicing when you're persecuted.

God gives us eternal blessings. He gives us great rewards in heaven. He gives us a crown for eternity.

And He makes us shine like the stars forever. The Christians in North Korea pray our persecution and suffering are our joy and honor. We want to accept ridicule, scorn, and disadvantages with joy in Jesus'

name.

We want to wipe others' tears away and comfort the suffering. We want to be ready to risk our lives because of our love for our neighbor so that they also become Christians. We want to live our lives according to the standards set in God's Word.

And these are the great promises, Matthew 5, verses 10-12. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. We read it so often when you're reviled and persecuted.

And when they say all kinds of evil against you, falsely for my name's sake. Rejoice! Be happy! It's the other side of the emotion from the world, beloved. It is a heavenly joy.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad. For great is your reward in heaven. For so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Revelation 2.10 said, Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Daniel chapter 12.3 says, Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of firmament. And those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever and ever.

Praise God. Some of you watch television. You watch the stars.

There's so many stars chosen. You say, I want to be a star. I want to be a star for America.

I want to be a star in singing. I want to be a star in dancing. But God says, if you are a star for me and turn many to righteousness, then he says in Daniel 12.3, You will shine like the stars forever and ever.

It is a great reward. We just need to believe it. We need to internalize it.

And we need to understand it. The next point, promises of God during persecution. Deuteronomy chapter 31 verse 6. Be strong and of good courage.

Do not fear nor be afraid of them. For the Lord your God, he is the one who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.

And Matthew chapter 10.28 says, Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body. What you will put on is not life, more than food, and the body more than clothing. Eternal life, beloved.

Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Do not fear.

Therefore you are of more value than many sparrows. Luke chapter 12 verse 7. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Father God loves you so very much.

You're like his little baby. Like a mom carries her baby, and he looks at you and he says, This is my baby. This baby believes in me.

I'm counting not only the fingers, as moms do, not only counting the toes of their little one, but I'm counting your hairs, says the heavenly Father. I love you so much. But yes, I also love the unbelieving, and I might ask you to give your life that others might live.

And it's all right, beloved. The presence of Christ during persecution is the next point. The presence of Christ during persecution.

Pastor Wurmbrand spent 14 years in prison and had 18 pieces of flesh cut out of him. He relates that during torture he forgot all. He could not remember Scripture.

He could not remember sermons. He couldn't remember anything. But he said what he remembered was the presence of the indwelling Christ who comforted him.

He said it was Christ, the Son of God, who got me through this period of time. He sustained me. He helped me through.

And then 2 Corinthians 12, verse 9, And he said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, most gladly, I will rather boast in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Matthew 28, 20.

And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age, and nothing can separate you from his love, even if you're experiencing great, great persecution. Point number six, perseverance of the saints to the end. 1 Peter 4, verses 12 to 13.

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trials, which is to try you as though some strange thing happened to you, but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's suffering, that when his glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. And then Romans 8, 18. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

It is not the temporal, it is the eternal. It is not the now, it is your future, beloved Christians. For eternity, what a wonderful thing, the glory of the future cannot be compared with what we might have to go through now.

Let us close with point number seven, preparation for persecution. Some of you are still here afraid. And the reason you're afraid is because you believe Satan and not God.

He puts this fear into you. It is not God. And so you must repent.

You must cry out to God and say to him, Lord, Lord, this fear is overcoming me. I reject it in Christ's name. I will believe you that you will sustain me in my hour of need.

I believe that you will not tempt me beyond that which I'm able to bear. Praise God, praise God. Then that was A, we must repent of all sin and fear.

Number B, we must examine ourselves and see that we are in the faith. Beloved, if you're not in the faith, you're not able to withstand what is coming. So if you are a nominal Christian, even as my brother said, you're not doing the word of God, perhaps you should really question.

You should give your life to Christ. Repent of those ways and do what the word of God says. So examine yourself.

Number C, evidence a personal relationship with Jesus. Do you walk with him? Do you talk with him? Does he tell you you're his own? And the joys we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known. Praise God, there ought to be a personal relationship between you and the Savior from day to day.

And then D, practice forgiveness for those that hurt you. And you know there's much more hurt coming in the future, so you can start now. Forgive everyone that has ever hurt you.

Forgive those in church that you cannot stand. Someone has a funny laugh. There are people in your family that get on your nerves.

Forgive them. The people at your job, at your office, at your plant, at your school, at your university. Before you can love them, you need to forgive them.

Then practice love through the Holy Spirit as the next point. Point E, apply Matthew 5.44. Love them after forgiving them. Pray for them.

Bless them. Do good for them. You know what the evidence is when you have forgiven? When you do something good for the person that has hurt you.

That's the evidence. Practice joy and humbleness. I want to send all Christians to smile school.

You're so miserable. You're so judgmental. You're so sour.

Why would I want to be a Christian like you? I don't want to be like you. But give me a heavenly smile. Go to smile school with God.

Ask for his gladness. Ask for joy to come back into your heart because you've lost it. You see, when you fill up your life with the joys of this world, football games, TV, Internet, people out there, Broadway shows.

When I fill up with the joys of this world, there's no space left for what? There's no space left for the joy of the Lord. So talk in psalms and hymns. Fill up with the word of God as Brother Muniz said.

And then practice witnessing as the next point. You need the Holy Spirit. You need love from the Holy Spirit.

Be ready. Write a short testimony with a verse of Scripture in it because even if your testimony fails, the verse built into your testimony can never fail. Praise God because the word of God shall not return void.

And then point H, practice denying the flesh. Get along with less. Can you eat less? Can you get along without TV? Can you get along without the Internet? Can you do with less possessions? Would you lay down your life? Praise God.

And then I, practice living the cross. The top of the cross is prayer. The bottom of the cross is the Bible.

One arm is for witnessing. The other arm is for fellowship. Yes, and to learn to love your fellow Christian in church.

Love people at the office. Love people at university. If you don't love them, if you judge them, even before you love them, they will never listen to you.

So use that part of the cross to have fellowship. And then in the center of it is my relationship with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. And it is also my place of sacrifice and surrender, where I lay down before God.

And so if you remember nothing about today, but if you remember that cross up there, and the top of it is your prayers, is going up to God. On the bottom is the Bible. On the left-hand side is witnessing.

On the right-hand side is your relationship with others. And then in the center of it all is your relationship with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Praise God.

And it is then your sacrifice and your submission to Him, because without Him you can't do. The flesh profits. The Spirit is.

The flesh profits nothing. The Spirit is life. So let the Holy Spirit, let God work through you, and things will change.

So practice the living cross. In closing, here is an example of a person who had died to himself. Thomas Hawker from England in 1555.

He was to be burned. His friend said to him, I have to know. His friend lowered his voice so as not to be heard by the guard.

He said, Thomas, I have to ask you this favor. I need to know. I need to know what the others say about grace.

Is it true? Will God really help us? Tomorrow, tomorrow when they burn you at the stake, if the pain is tolerable and your mind is still at peace, lift your hands above your head. Do it right before you die, Thomas. I have to know.

And Thomas Hawker whispered to his friend, I will. The next morning, Hawker was bound to the stake, and the fire was lit. The fire burned a long time, but Hawker remained motionless on the stake.

His skin was burned to a crisp, and his fingers were gone. Everybody watching supposed he was dead, but suddenly and miraculously, Hawker lifted his hands, still on fire, over his head. He lifted them up to the living God, and then with great rejoicing, he clapped three times, and the people there broke out into shouts of praise of this incredible God.

Hawker's friend had his answer. Beloved, do you have your answer this morning? America is under the judgment of God. Pray for your leaders.

But Joshua gave an ultimatum to the children of Israel. And in Joshua 24, 15, it says, And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourself this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Would you be willing to stand in your seat and stand up for the Lord and say, but for me and my house, we will serve the Lord, no matter what the cost? Would you be willing to stand? Many years later in Jerusalem, the religious leaders and political leaders of the Jewish nation severely threatened Peter and John not to speak or to teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered in Acts chapter 4, 19 to 20, and said to them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

Let us reflect on these words and where you stand today, beloved. Thank you for standing. Would you all rise, please, for a moment? And we will close in a word of prayer.

Would you all rise, please? Heavenly Father, we come to you in the name of Jesus. We thank you for your greatness, for your glory, for your love, that even us you might use as a great witness for others. I thank you so much, Lord.

I thank you for every family, for every father, for every mother that stood and declared that they will follow you, Father, that it is their commitment. Praise God. And so the disciples prayed, Why did the nations rage and the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ.

For truly against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever your hand and your purposes determined before to be done. And now, Lord, look on their hearts and grant to your servants that with all boldness they may speak your word by stretching out your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus. And, Lord, I pray for everyone in this auditorium who needs to repent this morning, Father.

I pray that they would repent, perhaps during the break, perhaps in the prayer room in the back, Lord. I pray that they would repent of fear, of unbelief, that you will not be with them where they do not understand your plan or your word, Father. I pray that you would remove that veil and that they would make that choice even today.

Dear Lord, fill us anew with your Holy Spirit and help us to speak your word with boldness, for we ask this in Jesus' holy name. Amen. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/6FmH5Z4VZ2U.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/edgar-reich/preparing-the-body-of-christ-for-persecution/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net