

Persecution

by Oswald Chambers

Oswald Chambers explores the nature of persecution and the Christian's response, emphasizing devotion to Christ amidst suffering.

Scripture: Matthew 5:39, Luke 18:31, Acts 6:8, Acts 26:14, 2 Corinthians 5:14

Topics: "Christian Persecution", "Humility In Suffering"

Description

Oswald Chambers preaches about persecution and the challenges faced by Christians who stand firm in their faith, using the example of Stephen who faced false accusations and persecution for his unwavering faith and wisdom. Chambers emphasizes the importance of carrying the kingdom of God within, even in times of destitution and loneliness, and finding joy in persecution for the sake of Christ. He also discusses the humiliation and humility of being a Christian, highlighting the need to exhibit the character of Jesus when faced with insults and personal attacks.

Transcript

"Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. ■ Then there arose some from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen... disputing with Stephen. ■ And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke.

"Then they secretly induced men to say, 'We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.' And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon him, seized him, and brought him to the council.

"They also set up false witnesses who said, 'This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law.' ... ■ And all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel." Acts 6:8-15

Oswald Chambers: "Persecution is systematic vexation, it doesn't not leave you alone, it is something that throngs you; but to be boycotted means to be left alone, destitute of the comrades you used to have-- 'they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.' But they don't know you carry a wonderful kingdom within, a kingdom full of light and peace and joy no matter how destitute and alone you may be on the outside. That is the wonderful work of the Lord in a man's soul. 'Rejoice in that day and leap for joy.'

"When you begin to deport yourself among men as a saint, they will leave you absolutely alone, you will be reviled and persecuted. No man can stand that unless he is in love with Jesus Christ.... Devotion to a Person is the only thing that tells; devotion to death to a Person, not devotion to a creed or a doctrine." (O. C. Daily Devotional Bible, page 599)

July 14th: The account with persecution

"But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." Matthew 5:39

Oswald Chambers: "These verses reveal the humiliation of being a Christian. Naturally, if a man does not hit back, it is because he is a coward; but spiritually if a man does not hit back, it is a manifestation of the Son of God in him. When you are insulted, you must not only not resent it, but make it an occasion to exhibit the Son of God. You cannot imitate the disposition of Jesus; it is either there or it is not. To the saint personal insult becomes the occasion of revealing the incredible sweetness of the Lord Jesus....

"Every time I insist upon my rights, I hurt the Son of God; whereas I can prevent Jesus from being hurt if I take the blow myself. That is the meaning of filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ. The disciple realizes that it is his Lord's honour that is at stake in his life, not his own honour.

"Never look for right in the other man, but never cease to be right yourself. We are always looking for justice; the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount is--Never look for justice, but never cease to give it."

September 23rd - The missionary's goal

"Behold, we go up to Jerusalem." Luke 18:31

Oswald Chambers: "In the natural life our ambitions alter as we develop; in the Christian life the goal is given at the beginning... Our Lord Himself. We start with Christ and we end with Him--'until we all attain to the stature of the manhood of Christ Jesus,' not to our idea of what the Christian life should be. The aim of the missionary is to do God's will, not to be useful, not to win the heathen; he is useful and he does win the heathen, but that is not his aim. His aim is to do the will of his Lord.

"In Our Lord's life Jerusalem was the place where He reached the climax of His Father's will upon the Cross, and unless we go with Jesus there, we shall have no companionship with Him. ...

"'The disciple is not above his Master.' The same things will happen to us on our way to our Jerusalem. There will be the works of God manifested through us, people will get blessed, and one or two will show gratitude and the rest will show gross ingratitude, but nothing must deflect us from going up to our Jerusalem.

"'There they crucified Him.'" That is what happened when Our Lord reached Jerusalem, and that happening is the gateway to our salvation. The saints do not end in crucifixion: by the Lord's grace they end in glory. In the meantime our watchword is--I, too, go up to Jerusalem."

February 4th: The overmastering majesty of personal power

"For the love of Christ constraineth us." 2 Cor. 5:14

"Very few of us know what it means to be held in a grip by the love of God; we are held by the constraint of our experience only. The one thing that held Paul, until there was nothing else on his horizon, was the love of God. 'The love of Christ constraineth us'--when you hear that note in a man or woman, you can never mistake it. You know that the Spirit of God is getting unhindered way in that life.

"When we are born again of the Spirit of God, the note of testimony is on what God has done for us, and rightly so. But the baptism of the Holy Ghost obliterates that for ever, and we begin to realize what Jesus meant when He said--'Ye shall be witnesses unto Me.' Not witnesses to what Jesus can do--that is an elementary witness-- but 'witnesses unto Me.' We will take everything that happens as happening to Him, whether it be praise or blame, persecution or commendation.

"No one can stand like that for Jesus Christ who is not constrained by the majesty of His personal power. It is the only thing that matters, and the strange thing is that it is the last thing realized by the Christian worker. ... Men may call him mad or sober, but he does not care; there is only one thing he is living for, and that is to persuade men of the judgment seat of God, and of the love of Christ. This abandon to the love of Christ is the one thing that bears fruit in the life, and it will always leave the impression of the holiness and of the power of God, never of our personal holiness."

January 28th: It is hardly credible that one could so persecute Jesus!

"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" Acts 26:14

"Am I set on my own way for God? ... Whenever we are obstinate and self-willed and set upon our own ambitions, we are hurting Jesus. Every time we stand on our rights and insist that this is what we intend to do, we are persecuting Jesus....

I may teach sanctification and yet exhibit the spirit of Satan, the spirit that persecutes Jesus Christ. The Spirit of Jesus is conscious of one thing only--a perfect oneness with the Father, and He says 'Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.' All I do ought to be founded on a perfect oneness with Him, not on a self-willed determination to be godly. This will mean that I can be easily put upon, easily over-reached, easily ignored; but if I submit to it for His sake, I prevent Jesus Christ being persecuted."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/oswald-chambers/persecution/>

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