

Vi. to Marion Mcnaught, When Persecuted for Her Principles

by Samuel Rutherford

The sermon encourages believers to follow the example of Jesus in suffering patiently and to trust in God's presence and judgment.

Scripture: Psalm 44:17, Psalm 119:92, Isaiah 50:6, Habakkuk 2:3, Matthew 18:21, Romans 12:19, 2 Corinthians 4:8, Hebrews 10:36, 1 Peter 2:23

Topics: "Persecution", "Suffering"

Description

Samuel Rutherford encourages a beloved sister to endure persecution and suffering by looking to the example of Jesus Christ, who endured insults and pain without retaliation, entrusting Himself to God's righteous judgment. He urges her to embrace the marks of Christ, reminding her that the war between good and evil has been ongoing for centuries. Rutherford advises her to hold fast to her faith, remain patient, forgive her enemies, and trust in God's timing for deliverance, emphasizing that those who believe will not be overcome. He concludes by exhorting her to find strength and comfort in the midst of trials, rejoicing in the opportunity to bear reproaches for Christ.

Transcript

WELL-BELOVED SISTER, -- I have been thinking, since my departure from you, of the pride and malice of your adversaries; and ye may not (since ye have had the Book of Psalms so often) take hardly with this; for David's enemies snuffed at him, and through the pride of their heart said, 'The Lord will not require it' (Ps. 10.13). I beseech you, therefore, in the bowels of Jesus, set before your eyes the patience of your forerunner Jesus, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him who judgeth righteously (1 Pet. 2.23).

And since your Lord and Redeemer with patience received many a black stroke on His glorious back, and many a buffet of the unbelieving world, and says of Himself, 'I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting' (Isa. 50.6); follow Him and think it not hard that you receive a blow with your Lord. Take part with Jesus of His sufferings, and glory in the marks of Christ. If this storm were over, you must prepare yourself for a new wound; for, five thousand years ago, our Lord proclaimed deadly war betwixt the Seed of the Woman and the seed of the Serpent.

Be you upon Christ's side of it, and care not what flesh can do. Hold yourself fast by your Savior, howbeit you be buffeted, and those that follow Him. Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be. 'We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed' (II Cor. 4.8, 9). If you can possess your soul in patience, their day is coming. Worthy and dear sister, know to carry yourself in trouble; and when you are hated and reproached, the Lord shows it to you -- 'All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten Thee, neither have we dealt falsely in Thy covenant' (Ps. 44.17).

'Unless Thy law had been my delight, I had perished in mine affliction' (Ps. 119.92). Keep God's covenant in your trials; hold you by His blessed word, and sin not; flee anger, wrath, grudging, envying, fretting; forgive a hundred pence to your fellow-servant, because your Lord hath forgiven you ten thousand talents: for, I assure you by the Lord, your adversaries shall get no advantage against you, except you sin, and offend your Lord, in your sufferings. But the way to overcome is by patience, forgiving and praying for your enemies, in doing whereof you heap coals upon their heads, and your Lord shall open a door to you in your trouble: wait upon Him, as the night watch waiteth for the morning.

He will not tarry. Go up to your watch-tower, and come not down, but by prayer, and faith, and hope, wait on. When the sea is full, it will ebb again; and so soon as the wicked come to the top of their pride, and are waxed high and mighty, then is their change approaching; they that believe make not haste. Now, again, I trust in our Lord, you shall by faith sustain yourself and comfort yourself in your Lord, and be strong in His power; for you are in the beaten and common way to heaven, when you are under our Lord's crosses.

You have reason to rejoice in it, more than in a crown of gold; and rejoice and be glad to bear the reproaches of Christ. I rest, recommending you and yours forever, to the grace and mercy of God. Yours in Christ.

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