

John 53 – World's Duty: Persecute and Kill Believers

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John 15:26-16:3

Christ Warns Apostles and Believers

- Christ continues warning His Apostles, and through them all believers, that the World's desire is to persecute and kill believers
 - Believers: Godly lights exposing the Darkness' *lie* (2Th 2:9-12)
 - Our faith: Received from the Father reveals God's goodness exposing the World's *Lie* – God is Evil (Jo 8:45)
 - Lucifer: Father of all unrepentant sinners (Jo 8:44)

If Believers Were Saved by Choice

- Lucifer would be proved true, and Scriptures a lie, if believers could choose God apart from the Spirit
(Jo 8:43; 10:27-30; Ro 3:10-18; 8:7-8; 1Co 2:14)
 - No one is righteous (sinner); no one understands God
 - Free will salvation is the foundation of losing salvation
 - Apart from the Spirit all would remain lost forever
- Christ in the flesh succeeded *only* because of the Spirit; the same Spirit who indwells us so we will also succeed
Another Lie: People choose to be saved making salvation a system of works
Absolutely contrary to Scriptures as Christ states in our passage even in the OT

Thus, Christ *Promises* the Spirit

- Again, Christ promises to send, from the Father, the Holy Spirit as our Advocate to the Father
 - Spirit's main attribute: Truth
 - Spirit reveals God's truth: Salvation through the Son (Ac 4:31-32; He 2:1-13)
 - Spirit restrains Lucifer today until his time comes (2Th 2:1-12)
- His mission of Truth to us: *Hagiazo Process* - Revealing our lies, replacing them with God's truth (Light)

Spirit Empowers Believers

- Under the power of the Spirit (χάρισμα) we become living witnesses to God's truth: Salvation in Him (1Pe 2:5)
 - We are living messages sent forth into the World (2Co 5:2)
 - To those who are called; the scent of Life (2Co 2:14-17)
 - To those who remain in sin; the stench of death (2Co 2:14-17)
 - Our works of faith fall into two categories: (1Co 3:10-15; 1a 2:14-20)
 - With Spirit - Gold, silver, etc. and will remain
 - Without Spirit - Wood, hay, etc. and will be burned

Christ: Honest Uber Alles

- Christ tells Apostles now so they will not fall away (σκανδαλιζω) when the World persecutes & kills them
 - His message scandalizes, inflames, the World
 - World seeks to destroy message and messengers (Angels)
- These men, with Him from the beginning, will be sent into the World as messengers directly taught by Him; they will suffer because they will have His Logos in them

Two Major Fears of Jews

- The Jews had two major fears; both were separation
 - They would be "put out of the synagogue"; i.e., ostracized by their culture including their families
 - They would die, universal fear of all peoples; even Christ's Flesh feared Separation: Death
- Christ **promises** this will happen to them
 - Occurring to Christians today: Most persecuted faith

Applicable to Jewish Culture

- The nature of the first shows that they will not change Jewish culture
 - Jewish culture will reject Truth to preserve their *lie* and to remove the messengers of that Truth
- The nature of the second shows that they will not change Gentile culture
 - Death is the universal antidote to Truth and change

Faithful Witnesses

God always has faithful witnesses to His truth which reveals the *lie* of Lucifer and the World

Cain: Textbook Example

- Cain, raised as messiah, struggled against truth (Ge 4:1-10)
 - God rejected him but accepted his brother, Abel
 - Cain's flesh roared with rage even when warned by God
 - Cain murdered his brother rather than control his sin
- Cain was of his fathers, Lucifer and Adam, liars and murderers as are all sinners (Christians are simply repentant sinners) (Je 5:44; Ro 5:12-14)

Moses: Contrast in Truths

- As a young man educated in Pharaoh's court Moses knew power as well as his heritage (Ex 11:23-35)
 - Moses succumbed to sin to change the plight of the Hebrews in Egypt - Anger leading to Murder (Ex 2:11-14)
 - Moses spent 40 years in the barrens learning to control his temper until God called him forth (Ex 3:1-10)
 - Moses struggled with anger but never murdered again (Ex 32:17)

Jews and Their Prophets

- God sent the Jews Prophets to redirect them back to the true faith when they wandered after the World
 - Isaiah - Rabbinic tradition: Placed in a hollowed tree and sawn asunder
 - Jeremiah - Imprisoned for speaking God's truth and then taken to Egypt by the people against God's word
 - Ezekiel - Rabbinic tradition: Killed by an irate Jew when Ezekiel admonished him for worshipping idols

The List is Endless

- List of the persecuted for remaining true to God would be endless according to the writer of Hebrews (He 11:32-40)
 - God has always had faithful witnesses in the World via the Spirit; they have always suffered
 - Some witnesses were resurrected demonstrating God's power and the World's impotence
 - Yet, they did not receive the New Covenant; yet: God was waiting for the fullness of time to send His Son for sin (Ep 1:3-10)

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Stephen – First to Die (Ac 6:8-7:60)

- Stephen – Appointed deacon in the Church
 - His Greek name {Στέφανος} means crown (Ja 1:12)
 - His office was to serve the church not be boss of it (Ac 6:1-7)
 - He testified with vigor to the truth of Jesus' salvation
 - Jews from the Empire colluded Sanhedrin to arrest him
 - Stephen recounted Jewish history and their betrayal of God; in response, they stoned him – Paul was present

Saul – Paul

- Paul is the best known persecutor of Christians because it is detailed in the Bible (Ac 9:1-31)
 - Saul {Hebrew name} – Persecuted Christians to protect Jewish faith {Similar to Moses}
 - Paul {Greek name} – Persecuted by Jews, and Christians who promoted Judaism adherence, until executed by the Romans for promoting a non-state sanctioned faith (probably at the instigation of the Jews)

James – First Apostle to Die

- Peter, James and John stayed near Jerusalem (Ac 3:1-4:22; 12:1-23)
 - Herod, Agrippa I (Grandson of Herod, the Great), arrested and executed James (Ἰάκωβος) the Apostle
Passover Season: Feast of Unleavened Bread
 - Jews were to purge their sin and embrace God's grace
 - They rejected His truth by taking pleasure in James execution such that Herod arrested Peter

Peter – Selected the Next to Die

- When Herod saw that the Jews were *pleased* with James death, he had Peter arrested (Ac 12:3-19)
 - Sanhedrin had been unable to quiet Peter, and all the Apostles, nor defeat their thesis {Guided by the Spirit} (Ac 4:18-22; 5:17-42)
 - Herod intended to execute Peter after the Passover
 - God sent an angel to release Peter from Prison
 - Yet, Peter *knew* he would eventually be killed for truth (Jo 21:18-19)

John – Exiled on Penal Island

- John, writer of this Gospel, was imprisoned on the penal island of Patmos as a very elderly man
 - His crime: Teaching the truth of the Gospel primarily in Ephesus: Roman Province of Asia
 - His blessing: Given the vision of Revelation to close the canon of Scripture revealing God's final victory begun in Genesis 1:1 (vs 21:20-26)

World Hates Truth

- God is the author of truth and His Son repeats all He has heard from the Father
 - Christ tells the Apostles so they will remember that He warned them when these brutalities occur
 - Christ drives home the message that the World hates them because it first hated Him; they are His epistles (2Co 3:4-1)
 - Emphases why they need the Advocate, God's Spirit

World Continues Attacking Today

- Peter's warning is well given for all believers (1Pe 4:12-17)
 - Do not be surprised when Lucifer, and the World, attack you because you have His *Logos*, His Light in you
 - Do not attract the World's ire due to meddling: Pietistic moralistic behavior forced onto the world or be guilty of living as the World, as evil doers; God judges His own
 - Rather, be guilty of living His Truth via the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19-20)

Lucifer's Lie, the World's delusion is that they are doing good persecuting Christians
By their definition: Christians are the haters because we can only teach about the One Way to God