

Sermon Series: Luke 21:5-38 Grace to Stand When the World Is Falling

Sermon Text: Luke 21:10-19 The Grace of Perseverance

Because the enemies of Christ oppose His rule, Christ gives us perseverance to testify for Him against all opposition.

1) The enemies of Christ oppose the people of Christ (21:10-12; 16-17).

- a) Political Context of Early Christians:
 - i) “nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom”: Israel will rebel against Rome (AD 66-70)
 - ii) “famines and pestilences”: results of war
 - iii) “earthquakes . . . great signs from heaven”: calamities in creation serve as harbingers of political upheavals
 - iv) Jewish Christians were commanded not to be fired up by nationalistic zeal for Jerusalem in the coming war.
 - v) Jews saw Christians as traitors, much like Jeremiah during the Babylonian invasion (6th century BC).
- b) Persecution of Early Christians:
 - i) “they will lay their hands on you and persecute you”: physical and social penalties (even death, v. 16)
 - (1) “synagogues”: Trial before Jewish Courts
 - (2) “kings and governors”: Trial before provincial Roman Courts
 - ii) “even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends”: intimate betrayals (like Judas)
 - iii) “You will be hated by all”: all Jewish parties hostile to Christians; “moral” revulsion toward Christians
 - iv) Persecution of Christians because of Christ: “for My name’s sake” (21:12, 17; cf. Acts 9:4)
- c) **Application:**
 - i) Jesus has a claim on all nations, just as He did on Jerusalem. Christians are called to press this claim, not only on individuals, but on the nations (Matt. 28:19; Mark 13:10).
 - ii) Our Time is seeing a rebellion against Christ’s claims in nations that once acknowledged His right. Christians should expect to bear the brunt of their hostility.
 - iii) This text does **not** teach that Christians should resign themselves to hostility in every nation in every generation until the Second Coming of Christ.

2) Christ gives us perseverance to testify for Him against all opposition (21:13-15, 18-19).

- a) “By your endurance you will gain your souls.”: “Endurance” refers to persistence in testifying to the Truth/Christ. The authorities will promise life if the Christians recant; Christ promises life if the Christians endure (cf. 12:4-5, 8-9)
- b) “your opportunity to bear witness”: courtroom testimony in which Christ has the nations on trial
- c) “not to meditate before hand how to answer”: You are not to prepare your defense to avoid the world’s verdict.
- d) “I will give you a mouth and wisdom which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict”: Christ is present through our trials in the person of the Holy Spirit (cf. 12:11-12; Acts 6:10; 18:9-10)
- e) “not a hair of your head will perish”: God is sovereign in all our trials (Rom. 8:28; Eph. 1:22).
- f) **Application:**
 - i) Perseverance is necessary.
 - ii) Perseverance is God’s work (John 6:38-40; 10:28-29; Rom. 8:35-39; 1 Pet. 1:5).
 - iii) In Revelation faithful witness for Christ spells “martyr.”
 - iv) The natural inclination to self-preservation (physically, socially, financially, etc.) can militate against perseverance as a faithful witness (Luke 9:23-27). The only way to overcome this is Christian hope (1 John 3:2-3; Rev. 2:10-11; cf. Rev. 2:7, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21).
 - v) Think about the Life you will gain!

Doxology: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Peter 1:3-5