

Sunday, November 16, 2014

Glorifying God as a Christian

Speaker: Joe Boot

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:12-18

Sermon Notes:

1. Christians are called to live in the flesh for God.
2. Because of our faith, all kinds of trials may come upon us.
3. The source of our persecution is the rejection of King Jesus. The fruit of rejecting Christ the King is the rejection of the King's sons. The reality of this is an expression of the King's judgment. And all this brings glory to God.
4. Those who bear the name of Jesus will be mistreated, rejected, mocked and treated as criminals.
5. Increasingly we see examples of anti-Christian violence.
6. Peter says we should expect to suffer, and we are to rejoice in our suffering, knowing we are following in the footsteps of Christ.
7. Our suffering is a pledge that we belong to Christ – a promise that we will partake in His glory.
8. The cause of our rejection as Christians is that we claim there is another king, Jesus, who opposes the lawless lifestyles of our society which, like Thessalonica and Corinth, is rife with licentiousness (cf. Acts 17:6-7).
9. The crucifixion itself was rooted in hostility toward Jesus' kingship and moral judgments.
10. Christ comes to receive a kingdom and He commands us to occupy till He returns. But many hate Jesus and do not want Him as Lord and King (cf. Luke 19:11-27).
11. Rejection of God's prophet, Samuel, was rejection of God as King (1 Samuel 8:7-8).
12. In his sin, man does not want a transcendent and sovereign authority to rule over him.

13. The rule of God and His word (theocracy) is no more popular today than it was in the early church.
14. But God can transform persecutors into His servants as He did with Saul. In his violence against early Christians, Saul was actually persecuting Christ (Acts 9).
15. Facing death Polycarp remained loyal to Christ his King.
16. Though radically divided, yet the world is united in ignoring injustice and persecution against Christians.
17. Where the King is rejected the King's sons soon become outcasts (cf. 1 Peter 4:12), and when the King's sons are persecuted, Christ's glory is revealed because we are sharing in His sufferings.
18. Suffering for our own evil behavior is dishonorable.
19. We should suffer as Christians, speaking and living faithfully as Christians in every aspect of our lives.
20. Historically God has not judged kindly those who persecute His Church. Those who deny Christ's reign are brought to an end (2 Thess. 1:5-8).
21. We are blessed when insulted and persecuted. God is purifying and maturing the church (Mal. 3:1-3).
22. Thus persecutions are tokens of God's judgment on the wicked and His pledge of our salvation.
23. The God who cares for all things may yet call many rebels to Himself in repentance and salvation.

Application Questions:

1. Why does the world persecute Christians?
2. What should our attitude be in the face of suffering? Why?
3. What does Jesus teach in Matt. 10:16-33 about the Christian's suffering?
4. Do we freely identify ourselves as Christians in every aspect of our lives? Why are we ashamed?
5. In what ways does God deal with persecutors?
6. How should we respond to our persecutors?
7. Are we suffering as Christians or because of our own sin?