

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Mark: Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God

Part III: The Perfect Sacrifice Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 11:1-15:47

L. Heeding Christ's Lessons Regarding Future Events, Mark 13:3-37

2. Heeding Christ's Warnings About Personal Spiritual Dangers Under Persecution

(Mark 13:9-13)

I. Introduction

- A. 2 Timothy 3:12 ESV predicts that "all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."
- B. However, there are significant personal spiritual dangers that come with such persecution, and Jesus clarified these, giving instruction as to how to handle them in Mark 13:9-13, so we view this passage for our insight:

II. Heeding Christ's Warnings About Personal Spiritual Dangers Under Persecution, Mark 13:9-13.

- A. After warning about deceptions to occur both in the current Church era as well as in the future Great Tribulation period (Mark 13:3-8), Jesus warned His disciples to "beware" (*blepo*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 178; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 142-143) for **themselves** (*eaoutou*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 211), that is, to "Be on your guard," Mark 13:9a NIV, ESV.
- B. Believers would be persecuted both in the Church era and in the Great Tribulation, what Jesus described in Mark 13:9b-13, and, with that description, He warned of "wrongful retaliation under persecution," Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 168. We thus view Christ's warnings on personal spiritual dangers under persecution:
 1. First, believers will face various forms and degrees of persecution for the cause of Christ, Mark 13:9-10:
 - a. Believers will face opposition in trials in and from religious institutions, physical persecution and civil opposition in trials at the hands of civil authorities, Mark 13:9a,b,c,d.
 - b. In facing such persecutions, God will use believers to expose incriminating evidence against persecutors to make them face their need to believe in Christ or to repent of error, Mark 13:9e; John 15:18-22.
 - c. Indeed, the gospel must spread to all nations, much under the persecution of believers, Mark 13:10.
 2. Second, believers will need to avoid the lure to plan ahead how they are to answer their persecutors, but rely on the Holy Spirit under persecution for what to say and do to avoid spiritual defeat, Mk. 13:11 et al.:
 - a. If a believer knows he will face persecution, he is tempted to pre-plan how to handle it.
 - b. However, that is a futile move, for those who oppose the godly are taken captive by Satan to do his will (2 Timothy 2:24-26), and Satan is far more powerful and intelligent than the believer in his mortality, so one must instead be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might and equipping, Ephesians 6:12-18.
 - c. Accordingly, when the believer faces persecution, he must not preplan what he should say or do, but rely on the Holy Spirit to show him what to say and do under the fire of persecution, for only God knows what should be said and done to counter Satan who controls the persecutors, Mark 13:11.
 - d. Significantly, 2 Timothy 2:24-26 directs believers who face opposition not to argue or retaliate, but gently, patiently explain the facts to the persecutors, relying on God to deal with Satan's forces involved.
 3. Third, believers need to know that persecution may involve close and many people as Satan tries to isolate them relationally so as to destroy the inner man, but this is to be countered by a life of faith, Mk. 13:12-13:
 - a. Believers will see even close people like family members go so far as to betray them to die, Mark 13:12.
 - b. Believers will be hated of all men for Christ, the opposition coming from many parties, Mark 13:13a.
 - c. However, those who "endure to the end" will be delivered by God, Mark 13:13b, and we explain: (1) In the coming Great Tribulation era, "enduring to the end" involves living by faith in God's deliverance so as to remain faithful to the Lord unto death for His reward either in death or at Christ's Second Coming, cf. Luke 18:1-8. (2) Since believers in the Church era will face either death or the rapture or an end to a given round of persecution in life, God's call that they "endure to the end" means they are to live by faith in heeding God's Word for blessing until however God decrees that the persecution event must end.

Lesson: (1) *Believers who desire to live godly lives will face various forms and degrees of persecution in religious and civil realms, much for God's plan to incriminate their persecutors and to spread His truth.* (2) *The lure for the persecuted to pre-plan how to handle persecution must be resisted by relying on the Holy Spirit in order that Satan who is fueling the persecutors can be defeated.* (3) *Even if close ties or many people persecute the believer, he must handle it by trusting God as revealed in His Word until God decides to terminate the persecution event.*

Application: *May we follow Jesus' admonitions above to avoid personal spiritual defeat under godless persecution.*