

The Church (2)

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Work as He Worked / Persecution; Purity; Service / 2 Timothy 3:12–14

By looking at the apostolic church we can get an accurate idea of God's will. How did persecution effect the church and ministry. What is membership? What is God's ideal for the church today?

Notes

How has persecution changed the Christian church and its ministries? What is a church member? How to be a Christian today.

- Ten Days of Prayer
- Revival and
- Reformation

Review and Herald February 25, 1902: The Need of a Revival and a Reformation

A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.

- What is revival?
 - Seeking God

- with renewed energy
- What is reformation?
- Changing
 - priorities.
 - habits
 - thoughts
- Blend
- Reformation Alone:
 - legalism
- Revival Alone
 - Pentecostalism
 - Form Excitement

Christian Plow

- Last Sermon
 - lecture
 - sorry

- Explain
 - what
 - why
 - how

- Christianity Today
 - what is missing...

- Reading
 - GC

2 Timothy 3:12-14 ESV

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it

Persecution in Early Church

- Persecution of Nero
- Blamed as Cause of Calamities
- “Rebels of Empire”

Great Controversy Chapter 2—Persecution in the First Centuries

As they became the objects of popular hatred and suspicion, informers stood ready, for the sake of gain, to betray the innocent. They were condemned as rebels against the empire, as foes of religion, and pests to society. Great numbers were thrown to wild beasts or burned alive in the amphitheaters. Some were crucified; others were covered with the skins of wild animals and thrust into the arena to be torn by dogs. Their punishment was often made the chief entertainment at public fetes. Vast multitudes assembled to enjoy the sight and greeted their dying agonies with laughter and applause. Wherever they sought refuge, the followers of Christ were hunted like beasts of prey

- Catacombs

Revelation 2:10 ESV

Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

- Day = year
 - Ten year
 - Nero

The Seed of the Church

- Church Grows
- Not Dies
- Why?

Great Controversy Chapter 2—Persecution in the First Centuries

You may “kill us, torture us, condemn us.... Your injustice is the proof that we are innocent.... Nor does your cruelty ... avail you.” It was but a stronger invitation to bring others to their persuasion. “The oftener we are mown down by you, the more in number we grow; the blood of Christians is seed.”—Tertullian, Apology, paragraph 50.

- What does that world want?

- Persecution
 - church growing

- What was attractive
 - People willing to die
 - for faith...

- Evangelism methods???

- Working with youth???

- Don't pursue world's methods.

- What does world want?
 - **authentic living!**

Satan Changes Methods

- He was losing.
- Changes methods

Church in Pergamum

Revelation 2:14-15 ESV

But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

- Balaam
 - seeking honor
 - riches.
- Nicolaitans
 - Pagan teachings.

Great Controversy Chapter 2—Persecution in the First Centuries

The great adversary now endeavored to gain by artifice what he had failed to secure by force. Persecution ceased, and in its stead were substituted the dangerous allurements of temporal prosperity and worldly honor. Idolaters were led to receive a part of the Christian faith, while they rejected other essential truths.

- Lost Holy Spirit Power
- Lost magnetism to world.

Danger of Compromise

- Satan put on suit.
 - went to church.
- Baptized paganism.

Great Controversy Chapter 2—Persecution in the First Centuries

Now the church was in fearful peril. Prison, torture, fire, and sword were blessings in comparison with this.

- North Platte
 - baptismal standards.

- “Baptized into Christ”
 - “they love Jesus”
 - “they believe”

Great Controversy Chapter 2—Persecution in the First Centuries

As the followers of Christ united with idolaters, the Christian religion became corrupted, and the church lost her purity and power.

- Dangerous times.
- True and False
 - closely intertwined.
- Greatest danger
 - not world.
- Rather,
 - Christian world-lings

Great Controversy Chapter 2—Persecution in the First Centuries

There have ever been two classes among those who profess to be followers of Christ. While one class study the Saviour's life and earnestly seek to correct their defects and conform to the Pattern, the other class shun the plain, practical truths which expose their errors.

Love Like Jesus

- Jesus loved sinners.
- How do we
 - love like Jesus?
- Reject Pharisees
- Welcomed Tax Collectors

Great Controversy Chapter 2—Persecution in the First Centuries

Our Saviour taught that those who willfully indulge in sin are not to be received into the church; yet He connected with Himself men who were faulty in character, and granted them the benefits of His teachings and example, that they might have an opportunity to see their errors and correct them.

- Baptismal standards:
 - “I love Jesus”
- What about the life?

Ananias and Sapphira

Tell the story.

- Why God killed them?

Great Controversy Chapter 2—Persecution in the First Centuries

But there is no union between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness, and there can be no union between their followers. When Christians consented to unite with those who were but half converted from paganism, they entered upon a path which led further and further from the truth.

Christians Persecute Christians

- Those to fear:

- Christians.
- Future:

Great Controversy Chapter 38—The Final Warning

As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren.

- Past:
- Cain and Able
- Why Cain killed?
- Able's righteous life
 - condemned Cain's.
- Same reason -
 - Jesus rejected

Why God Allows Persecution

- Why Paul not healed?
- Why Ellen White sick?
- Make us dependent.
- Spiritual Self-Confidence
 - Greatest enemy.
- (Self-esteem problems).

Why No Persecution in Modern America?

- Where is the cross
 - of Christianity.

- No persecution
 - half-hearted.
- Can't make
 - persecution return?
- Or can we?

Great Controversy Chapter 2—Persecution in the First Centuries

Why is it, then, that persecution seems in a great degree to slumber? The only reason is that the church has conformed to the world's standard and therefore awakens no opposition. The religion which is current in our day is not of the pure and holy character that marked the Christian faith in the days of Christ and His apostles. It is only because of the spirit of compromise with sin, because the great truths of the word of God are so indifferently regarded, because there is so little vital godliness in the church, that Christianity is apparently so popular with the world. Let

- Why no persecution
 - we are cold.
 - worldly
- Nothing to persecute

- too like them...
- Check out next sentence:

Great Controversy Chapter 2—Persecution in the First Centuries

Let there be a revival of the faith and power of the early church, and the spirit of persecution will be revived, and the fires of persecution will be rekindled.

- Do we have
 - control over
 - persecution?
- To some degree
 - yes...
- No cross
 - because
 - we like it.

What is the Church?

- Salt
- Light
- Mission

Matthew 5:13–16 **ESV**

“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

- Light in the darkness.
- Church = City
- Shine together
- Mission Outpost

What is a Member?

- Missionary
- Shining Light.

1 Peter 2:9 ESV

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

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- Share what you have.
 - learn more
 - share more
 - train others.

Who am I?

- SDA
- Movement
- Calling
- Missionary

Appeal

- Be Christian
- Different than world
- Filled with Holy Spirit
- Long to Serve
- Serve word
 - yet different.