

The Growing Persecution of Christians: A Sign of the Times

Throughout history, Christians have found themselves under the shadow of persecution. The age-old question, “Are Christians the troubles of society?” has resurfaced in Western society and is reminiscent of King Ahab’s inquiry to the prophet Elijah, “Is this you, you troubler of Israel?” (1 Kings 18:17). Today, many in societies around the globe label Christians as the new “troubles” obstructing the perceived progress championed by certain groups.

A Historical Perspective

Christianity’s history is marked by moments of persecution, even driving the earliest Christian Separatists and Puritans to seek refuge in the New World to escape religious oppression. In America, a nation historically grounded in Judeo-Christian values, Christians have long felt secure. However, the landscape has shifted. Our society is witnessing the unsettling phenomenon of calling good evil and evil good, as Isaiah 5:20 forewarned.

Believers may find themselves in a situation reminiscent of the early days of the Roman Empire, shortly after the formation of the Christian church. During that era, new Christians bore the brunt of blame for numerous societal problems. Nero infamously accused Christians of setting fire to Rome, leading to widespread persecution. Christians were subjected to horrific trials, including facing lions in the arena and being thrust into gladiatorial combat. They were scapegoated for societal ills and often excluded from economic activities, a pattern that seems to be emerging in our modern society. This deep-seated animosity toward Christ and His

followers is not a novel phenomenon; it mirrors the historical disdain of pagans for the Lord and His representatives.

Notably, even non-Christians have acknowledged the positive influence of Christianity on society. Jewish commentators Dennis Prager and Ben Shapiro has lauded Christianity's role in providing moral and legal foundations that guide our civilization. They warn that dismantling these Judeo-Christian foundations may lead to societal chaos. The erosion of these principles is not limited to specific regions but is spreading across the world.

A Troubling Trend: Disassociation from Christian Values

Recent events highlight the growing tension between Christianity and certain sectors of society. As Charisma News reported, in Phoenix, Arizona, the Washington Elementary School District, by a board vote, severed ties with Arizona Christian University, citing the university's Christian beliefs as problematic. This action shines a spotlight on resistance to Christian influence and values.

Similar incidents are not isolated to Phoenix. A Los Angeles community expressed outrage when a church, which had rented space in a school facility for worship services during non-school hours, invited a speaker who shared her journey of leaving the LGBTQ lifestyle. The backlash led to the school disallowing any group from meeting on their premises, despite clear legal precedents that should allow religious organizations access.

The decline in the recognition of Judeo-Christian heritage can be traced back to a pivotal Supreme Court decision in 1980. In *Stone v. Graham*, the Court struck down a Kentucky law mandating the display of the Ten Commandments in public school classrooms. This decision, in essence, removed a moral compass from schools out of fear that children might be influenced by the principles within.

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Challenges and Misconceptions

Perceptions of Christianity are increasingly marred by misconceptions. In Queensland, Australia, the deputy police commissioner linked Christian Premillennialism to terrorism, a baseless accusation that fails to understand the Christian belief in a peaceful return of Jesus Christ.

Christianity often finds itself tied to extremism in today's climate. Australia's strict gun control laws have left society vulnerable to government overreach, highlighting the consequences of limiting individual freedoms.

This growing disdain for Christianity aligns with John 3:19, which states that people prefer darkness over light when their deeds are evil. Society's moral compass has shifted, leading to the labeling of good as evil and vice versa.

A Time of Tribulation

In this increasingly hostile world, it is vital for Christians to remain steadfast in their faith. Trust in Jesus Christ, who has conquered the world, and do not be troubled. Continue to be salt and light in a darkening world.

As challenging as the present may be, it pales in comparison to the world that will emerge after the Rapture, when the restraining influence of the Church is removed. At that time, those who have not placed their faith in Christ will face unparalleled hostility.

For Christians who advocate for their faith, involvement in politics becomes crucial. Engaging in the political realm ensures that our nation is led by individuals who adhere to Christian principles and the Word of God.

A Message of Hope

While society may be shifting, Christians are the preservers of moral integrity. By the power of the Holy Spirit, they hold back the tide of evil. However, a day will come when the Church is taken home in the rapture, and darkness will engulf the world. In a society where Christianity is increasingly viewed as “troublesome,” faith remains the anchor in an uncertain world. Yet the faithful have nothing to fear from the enemies schemes against them, for “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world: (1 John 4:4). {eo}

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