

Pastor Andrew Brunson Urges Believers to Prepare for the Coming Persecution

Pastor Andrew Brunson, who was detained for this faith in Turkey for two years on trumped-up terrorism and spying charges before being released in October 2018, told CBN News recently that persecution and harassment toward Christ followers in America is about to intensify in many ways and that Christians should be ready for it in the coming months.

“Jesus said this would happen,” Brunson says. “Just as the world hated him, it will hate His followers. As I look at our history in the States, over generations, people were faithful. We’ve had many sins and mistakes as a country, but there are many who honored God, especially leaders who did this publicly.

“I think everyone can see that there has been a significant change in this area,” he says. “Many leaders in our society now—the corporate world, entertainment, media, politics and academia—do not honor God and, in fact, they openly defy Him. They are increasingly hostile to those who identify clearly with Jesus and His teaching. So I believe it has actually already started. We already see the signs here. There is a tidal wave on the horizon, and it’s coming toward us very quickly. It’s not some far-off threat.”

Brunson says there are many ways that this persecution and harassment of believers will manifest itself in America.

“One is in marginalizing, shaming and canceling people,” Brunson says. “A big issue for us in the future is how we’re going to be able to get our message out to Christians and nonbelievers. What if you’re banned from social media, or no one will host your church website or podcast?

"Then, there's also deplatforming, especially of financial transactions," he says. "Just think how difficult it will be to be able to use a credit card or to have a bank account, and how that would affect you in your daily life. It's already happening to some groups.

"What happens if churches are told that, unless they change their teaching from the Bible, then they will lose their tax-exempt status and be closed down?" Brunson asks. "The thing is that those who persecute will justify their persecution by saying that we are hate groups, that what we have is a hate message of intolerance. It is very difficult to be despised and hated."

Tim Wildmon, president of the American Family Association, says this has already happened to his organization. In a release, Wildmon revealed that the credit card company processing the AFA's credit card donations has ceased doing so, without warning, since the first week of December.

And Wildmon says he's convinced, without question, the action was taken because "we are a Christian ministry, and we take public stands on moral issues."

"We are pursuing legal redress for this overt religious discrimination, but our attorneys have advised us not to name the offenders publicly at this point so as not to compromise the case," Wildmon says. "Rest assured, we will as soon as we can. Right now, however, this has disrupted our donation processing at a critical time of the year. This abrupt cancellation is costing the ministry tens of thousands of dollars each day, and that doesn't include legal fees that we will incur as we fight this discrimination. What we're experiencing today is the most serious attack AFA has faced since its inception over 40 years ago.

"We have found a different credit card processing company—that's good," Wildmon says. "However, the company that

dropped us refuses to release the personal and credit card information to the new processing company.”

In 2007, Brunson and his wife, Norine, began a ministry called Wave Starters. The intent of the ministry is to draw Christ-followers closer to His heart so that they can be prepared for the coming persecution.

Brunson says it helped him endure the two years he spent in a jail cell in Turkey.

“This is something that has been burning in my heart. We need to prepare,” Brunson says. “If we are not ready, that’s very dangerous. In my experience, there’s only one group—the International House of Prayer in Kansas City—that, as part of their training program, is actually preparing this generation for suffering, for persecution. It’s not something we’re doing in the churches.

“We must prepare ahead of time—and there is a threat, and we are afraid because fear is a real thing—we do not run but stand firm. There are several ways to do this, but the No. 1 that I want to underline is the way we prepare to stand in difficult times is by cultivating love for God. Years ago, I began to pray what I call the Wave Starter Prayer. It’s the name of our organization, of our ministry.

“I pray this way, ‘Father, draw me so close to Your heart that You will be able to trust me to start waves.’ So, we began to run after the heart of God, a pursuit of intimacy. Over the years, this pursuit of God’s heart prepared us for difficult assignments and included my time in prison. God knew that I would struggle; He knew that I would break. But He also knew that because of all of those years of drawing close to His heart in the most difficult times, I would turn toward Him and not away.

“So, the truth is that intimacy fuels perseverance, and we are willing to suffer for those we love,” Brunson says. “The thing

that best prepared me for me time under persecution was cultivating that love for God and running after his heart.”
{eoa}