
CHURCH OF THE
G E T E R N A L

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." – Matthew 24:14

August 15, 2012

Dear Brethren and Friends,

This is an extremely dangerous time for Christians!

The assaults which are prophesied to arise against the followers of Christ at the end of the age are only now in their beginning stages. As we have reported in our weekly Updates, religious persecution, especially in parts of Africa, has led to bloodshed. What is notable is that people who claim Christianity as their faith are being singled out in attacks from strident Islamic extremists.

In Europe—particularly, Germany—religious Jews, who maintain the practice of circumcision, are finding themselves at odds with a court decision which criminalizes such procedures (this also affects Moslems who observe a similar custom). This is happening in conjunction with other nations, such as Austria and Switzerland, and also with France, which is prohibiting the wearing of certain kinds of religious dress.

Now, while this may seem remote to us, the implications could not be more ominous! We must realize that persecutions of religious minorities, such as the Jews, will also be directed, in time, against members of God's Church.

Jesus Christ very specifically spoke of what would be happening in the time just before His return to the earth, and He warned of persecution: "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake" (Matthew 24:9).

Since being called by God and becoming a part of the Church of God, we have all lived in anticipation of these things happening. We have also been taught that God will help us to endure whatever we face—and that is borne out in 1 Corinthians 10:13:

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."

However, the very great peril we face today is the challenge of enduring faithfully in our calling—it is the extreme danger of the moment!

The Bible addresses this when we find statements such as: "...he who endures to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13); "by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor and immortality..." (Romans 2:7); "...hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:2); "...hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end" (Hebrews 3:14); "And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end..." (Hebrews 6:11); "...not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some..." (Hebrews 10:25); and, showing the certainty of the promise of our salvation by these words: "...those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful" (Revelation 17:14).

We are living in the "lull before the storm"! For most of us, life is filled with the so-called normal

things of family, work and personal activities. Added to this are our trials of poor health, of conflicts with others, of discouragement—and the list grows!

Throughout all of this, though, our challenge is that of preparing to become Spirit-born sons and daughters of God. We must not let down! In fact, Jesus strongly warned that His disciples should WATCH and BE READY for His return (compare Matthew 24:42, 44; 25:10, 13).

Ask yourself—are you FERVENT about God’s calling and about your involvement in the Work of God given to the Church—which is the ongoing Work of Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church of God?

Note what Jesus Christ said:

“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.” (Matthew 10:37-39).

Also, we have this warning from the apostle John:

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:15-17).

Faith was an integral constant in the life of Jesus Christ. He depended on the Father, and He even said that His accomplishments—His strength—all came from God (compare John 5:19, 30; 6:38; 8:28; 12:49; and 14:10).

Brethren and friends, if we—like Jesus Christ—willingly, with an open and obedient heart look to God our Father and learn to serve Him with absolute trust, we will not stumble or fail—not now, not ever!

In Christ’s Service,



Dave Harris