

Patience in Persecutions

Luke 21:11-19

Pastor Arlyn

Message Transcript

[00:00:00] Patience in persecutions. We had to wait until the last minute to release this message title screen because we were concerned that once you read it, you might not show up. Patience in persecutions. We are studying our way through the Olivet discourse delivered by Jesus and recorded by Luke. In Luke chapter 21, we read Christ's prophecy about the destruction of Herod's temple. We read the subsequent question from the disciples that followed. We added to that in verse 7, Matthew chapter 24 verse 3, and found out that the disciples were actually pretty mixed up in their understanding of eschatology end times things. But even though they were mixed up in their thinking, I'm so glad they asked the question, aren't you? Because had they not asked the question seeking clarity from the Lord, we would not have got perhaps this entire Olivet discourse about end time prophecy from Jesus. So I'm so glad that they asked the question. And it just goes to show our grade school teachers were right, there are no stupid questions. Now, a grade school teacher might disagree with me, but when it comes to the Bible, certainly that's true. There are no stupid questions. If there's stuff that you don't understand about the scriptures, you always seek out those answers. And the Lord rewards the seeker and gives the answers. So that's what he has done for the disciples in the Olivet discourse. Jesus started at the end. He began that all of that discourse with end time prophecy. In verses 8 through 11, Jesus gave us those pre tribulational signs, those pre tribulation precursors that were to tip us off as to the time period that we are living in and then carry on through the tribulation period all the way until the end of the tribulation period and the second coming of Christ and the ushering in of the Kingdom age. And Matthew 24 verse 8, we said, was the key to understanding why those things that Jesus gave us were actually signs.

[00:02:52] Because without that additional bit of information, Matthew chapter 24, verse 8, we would look at the things that Jesus listed wars and commotions, earthquakes, famines, pestilences, and we would say those aren't signs at all. That's nothing new to the Earth. I would have to agree with Solomon. There's nothing new under the sun. Man, that stuff's been with us ever since the fall of mankind. But it's when we understand, Matthew, chapter 24, verse 8, which Matthew throws on the end of the list of those signs that Jesus gave, Luke doesn't, but Matthew does, and it's understanding that that opens up the entire passage to you and shows you how those things are indeed signs. Here's what makes that list that Jesus gave us end time, pre tribulational precursors or signs, here's what makes them that way. When you start to observe these things in a completely different, ominous tone and you begin to see them take place in the same manner that labor pains do in the birthing process, that's it. That's how we are to understand these signs. So we talked about that a good deal last week, that what we're really looking for as we study through these events that Jesus gave us, we're looking for these things to increase in intensity and happen in greater frequency. We're looking for an up tick. We're looking for a change in tone. And I think we all agree we have started to see that if not before the year 2020. And we are seeing it now, I do believe, I'm a firm believer of that. Now, as far as the rapture goes, where does the Rapture fit in this whole scenario of end times events? Well, we don't know exactly, but we can get near to it by understanding these signs. The rapture could take place before these signs get too intense and happen too frequently. In other words, we could be taken out before these pre tribulational signs get too devastating. Or it could be that the Lord has reserved for us to stay here on the Earth and not rapture us out until the last minute when that last pre tribulational sign has ended and the Lord

is getting ready to launch the world into the time of tribulation. It could be that. But keep this in mind. What is the purpose for the Rapture? I think that clues us off as to the timing a little bit. The purpose of the Rapture is to take the church out of the world so that the church doesn't get punished for the world's rejection of Jesus Christ. We're not getting punished for rejection of Jesus Christ, the world is. So our thinking is this, that just like Enoch, just like Noah and his family, just like Lot and his family, the Lord is going to lift us off and lift us out before he lights this thing up. With that in mind, I think it's safe to say things should not get too much more intense before the Lord gets us out of here, too. And we get to be with him and watch the rest of the events, the pre tribulation signs and the events of the tribulation period unfold from a quite comfy spot in heaven, just as John the Revelator did from Revelation Chapter 4 all the way until the end. Those are good seats, box office seats in heaven.

[00:06:58] So where should our mindset be?

[00:07:02] We, the church, are to know the signs, we are to be observing the signs, but I don't think we should be fixating on the signs. I think what we should really be doing is listening for a sound. We're not so much concerned about the signs they're going to happen. We don't know how many are going to happen before we're out of here, but our role as the church is to be listening for a sound, the last trump of God, which has nothing to do with our former president and everything to do with God's final call to the godly.

[00:07:40] And then, well, the rest is history we're taken home, we live happily ever after, and the world is launched into a seven year period known as the apocalypse. Other synonyms would be the day of the Lord, the Great Tribulation, the time of Jacob's trouble for the Jews. So that's what we're heading for. And that's the recap. The recap is done and now we're out of time, so let's close in prayer. No, I'm kidding, of course. You know I have more to say, I usually do. We're going to move forward now in the text. We did not finish out verse eleven last week. So we're going to pick up right where we left off in verse eleven. Let's read, and there will be fearful sites and great signs from heaven. Now, I separated these last two signs from the rest of the pack last week for a reason. The reason I did that is because these last two signs bear the characteristics of events that take place during the tribulation period and not so much before it. It is possible that we could see minor versions of these two things in the pre tribulation signs, but I don't think it's likely and I certainly can't confirm that in the Bible. So I think it's safe to assume that what Jesus has done is he has taken us from the first of those pre tribulation signs and he has walked us through the whole thing until the very end of the tribulation period and the second coming of Christ, because we understand that, right? The signs that Jesus gave us, we refer to them as pre tribulation signs, but they don't stop when the tribulation period begins. They continue. The tribulation period, if you're going to compare it to childbirth like Jesus did and like Paul did, then I would look at it like this. The pre tribulation signs are early labor and the tribulation period would be active labor. But those same events that Jesus listed out are going to take place. It's just that they're going to amp up when the tribulation period officially begins. So that's, I believe, what we see here. And it would seem that these last two signs is the Lord's way of sort of putting a wrap on all of these signs that he gives us. These are two events, two things that take place during the tribulation period. Luke is the only gospel writer to insert these two things right there. No other gospel writer does that. So I am of the impression that these last two signs are the wrap up for the tribulation period, which ends in the second coming of Christ. All right, so let's just real quickly take a look at these two things individually. I wish I had time to go through and list these out

exhaustively, but as you know, we're going to be studying through the Book of Revelations soon. And so we'll save a lot of that for our verse by verse study through the book. But let me just throw a few fearful sites at you that we are going to see. Well, not us, but that the world is going to see during the tribulation period. Where do we find the text in the Bible for the tribulation period? The Book of Revelation, Chapter 6 through 19. That is the tribulation period. All right? In the tribulation period, here are some fearful sites. Revelation, chapter 6, verse 14. This is during the Sixth SEAL Judgment, and what happens is a great earthquake takes place and the scriptures tell us that every mountain and every island will be moved out of its place. This is complete topographical repositioning. Hawaii might end up somewhere else, hopefully closer to Uniontown. Jumonville might be a further drive for you. It might be a closer drive for you. It might be even higher in elevation. It might be lower than Uniontown in elevation. But there is this complete topographical repositioning there during the process of the opening of the Sixth SEAL, that sixth SEAL judgment. That's pretty early on in the tribulation period. Complete topographical repositioning. By the way, parenthetically, this is one of those reasons why the all millennial viewpoint is so bankrupt of any real valid Bible research and Bible study and exegesis. All millennialism is that belief that, hey, we're going through the tribulation period now. It's just that everything that you read in the tribulation period, it's all metaphoric and figurative and allegorical. You can't take any of it, any of it seriously. Well, I would like to sit down with someone that holds the all millennial viewpoint and I would like to say explain this to me. Has this happened yet in your all millennial viewpoint? Has the mountains and the islands all been moved out of their place? Or is this allegorical? Is this figurative? Explain it to me. Show me something. Show me some event in history that happened early on in the tribulation period that we're supposedly in that I could link to this event. And of course, there's no answer. The answer is that all millennialism is a very bankrupt and shoddy approach to tackling the Book of Revelation. The Book of Revelation, as you're going to see, is a very literal book. Here's what's going to happen. Six seals, six seals into the tribulation period. Every mountain and every island is going to be moved out of its place, just like the Lord said. Tough to believe? Absolutely. Tough to envision and fathom? Absolutely. But is it going to happen? It sure is, absolutely. So that's a fearful sight, don't you think? You look up and see Jumonville crashing down into the Earth. Islands, global repositioning. That's a fearful site. How about this one Revelation, chapter 8, verse 10, the third trumpet judgment. So, you know, those judgments go in order. You have the seven SEAL judgments, you have the seven trumpet judgments, and then you have the seven vial judgments or bowl judgments. This is during the third trumpet judgment. And we are told that a great star falls from the atmosphere to earth burning like a torch. It lands in fresh water and poisons one third of all fresh water on the planet. That may be a meteorite. That may be something manmade, that may be a nuke. But either way, it's going to be a fearful sight when you're looking out your back door or your rear window to your house and you see this big ball of fire pummeling toward the earth. A fearful sight indeed. Or how about this one Revelation, chapter 9 versus 1 through 10, this is the fifth trumpet judgment where the, it would seem, veil between the spirit realm and the physical realm becomes either thinned or done away with entirely, because we are told in that section that the Lord opens the bottomless pit and releases demonic chords onto the Earth. They are described as an army of locusts that devour plant life and physically attack people. Physically attack people, these are physical encounters between mankind and demons from hell, these demons wear crowns and breastplates, they have faces like men and hair like women. Tempted to make a joke there, but I better not. I better falter toward political correctness on this one. Faces like men and hair like women and teeth like lions, a fearful sight. A fearful sight, indeed. Following that revelation, chapter 9, verse 6, it says, after these attacks from unclean spirits that were released from the the abyss, the pit. The scripture tells us in those days, men will seek death and will not find it. They will desire to die and death will flee from them. So there you have it. Everyone wanted the the zombie apocalypse. That's the closest thing you're going to get and you hain't going to like it. You're going to want that to disappear real quick. You're going to want to die and you won't be able

to figure out how to accomplish that. That's a strong, very weighty statement that we'll cover in our study in Revelation. What about the other one? What about the signs in the heavens? Very definitely, in my opinion, only a tribulation period event, in my opinion. Now, these things could happen in some smaller, more minor degrees prior to the official launching of the apocalypse. But I see these quite a few times in that tribulation period as given to us by John, Revelation Chapter 6 through 19. I'm going to have you, by the time we get through Revelation, you're going to be able to recite this stuff with me. So Jesus talks more about these signs from heaven when we get down to verse 25. So we're going to cheat. We're going to steal those verses for a second. We're going to read 25 to 27 from Luke, 21 verse 25. Waiting for that to pop up on the screen there Luke chapter 21, verse 25.

[00:19:05] We're cheating, we through the control booth off back there. Verse 25 and there will be signs in the sun, in the moon and in the stars and on earth. Distress of nations.

[00:19:23] Boy that one's tough to believe, not. Distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them from fear. That's being so frightened that you have a heart attack right on the spot. Men's hearts failing them from fear. And it doesn't seem to apply to women. So that's a good one for you, women, just men. Men's hearts, failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth. They know what's coming. And then Jesus goes on to say, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken and they will see the son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. So these heavenly signs, or as we might call them, atmospheric or cosmic signs, signs that are visible in our atmosphere and in space, these signs begin early in the tribulation process or pardon me, period. Well, it's a process, too, but they begin early in the tribulation period, beginning with the sealed judgments. We read that the sun will temporarily be turned as black as sackcloth of hair. The moon will turn blood red, the stars of heaven will fall to the earth and the sky will recede like a scroll. It will just roll back and roll open. Major, major signs that take place in the atmosphere and on a cosmic level. Those sort of things happen throughout the tribulation period. Now they're temporary until we get to that last one in the tribulation. That last event, the scriptures describe to us there, that the sun and moon will go permanently dark and the stars from heaven will fall once again. And then that's it. The Lord returns. That ushers in the second coming and the kingdom of God on Earth. So Revelation, once we study it, you're going to see this, it wraps up exactly as Jesus has described here in Luke 21:25-27. It ends with those final, great, signs in the heavens, and when you see those final great signs here, let me just make this real easy for you, if you decide not to be saved and you stick around for the tribulation period, let me help you out. Once the church is raptured up and they're gone, you start your clock, you start counting approximately seven years. There may be some gap between the rapture and the beginning of the tribulation period, but you can pretty much settle on about a seven year time period. You're going to see those early on signs in the heavens during the sealed judgments. You're going to see them continue on through the tribulation period. And then about seven years into your ordeal, if you're still alive, when you see those signs, again, those great signs in the heavens, the sun and the moon going dark, you're not going to be able to miss this because, you know, wake up at noon or 1 p.m. like my kids do, and there's no sun. You're not going to miss this. And when that happens, you know that is it. The Lord immediately returns. That is the final great sign before the second coming. Verse 12, but before all these things, well, he just slammed the brakes right on us, didn't he? But before all these things, what's happening here?

[00:23:20] I'll tell you what's happening here.

[00:23:23] Even as I forewarned you, Jesus is weaving his way back and forth through the prophetic timeline. When the disciples ask him those questions, they ask him about the temple. They also ask him about the signs of the end and where did Jesus start in the Olivet discourse? He started at the end. He started with end times signs. But before all of these things, before all of what things? Before all of the things that Jesus has shared with them. That includes these End-Time eschatological signs and that includes the information that he gave them about the destruction of the temple before the end times kick off, before the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. Jesus wants to essentially pan his way back to the present day Jew that he was speaking to in order to speak to that present day Jew about the most pressing issue at hand for the first century A.D. believer in Christ. And here's what it was reading on in verse 12, before all those things that I just shared with you, he would say, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. So before the second coming, before the tribulation period, before the pre tribulation signs that Jesus gave them and even before the destruction of the Jewish temple, which was less than 40 years away before all of those things, the most pressing issue at hand for those saints that Jesus was talking to was this:

[00:25:35] Persecution, persecution is coming.

[00:25:41] Peter, James, John, Andrew, you four that pushed this question, here's what's going to happen. Before the temple falls, your fledgling faith is going to be put on trial before the world and you need to be ready for it. That's his point. And boy, was it ever. Their faith was put on trial publicly over and over again. And it did not take long for them to get there. Just walk through the Book of Acts. Acts Chapter 2, Simon Peter preaches the first ever Pentecostal sermon on the day of Pentecost. Three thousand saved, a wonderful move of God. He got away with that one. Acts chapter 3, The Lord uses Peter and John to heal, to raise up the lame man, and that launches Peter into a second publicly recorded sermon. He may have had more in between, but that's the second recorded sermon his sermon was to defend, well, how do you even say this? He was trying to get people not to think too highly of him and John. Said, why are you looking on us as if we did something special? We didn't do this. This was the Lord. We didn't do this by our own power. This man was saved through Jesus, who you guys crucified, you religious leaders that are listening in on this sermon but that God raised back up. That's how this lame man was healed. And that second sermon, those religious leaders indeed did hear his sermon and they didn't care much for it. And so he didn't get away with that second sermon. He was immediately, as the scripture tells us, and I quote, they laid hands on them, Peter and John, not to bless them and pray for them. They laid hands on them, just as Jesus said they would do in verse 12 of Luke, chapter 21. They laid hands on them. They imprisoned them. They put, excuse me, they put them on trial. And that persecution, imprisonment, religious trials, secular trials, those things would continue on from nearly the beginning, from nearly the launch of the New Testament Church all the way until 70 AD, the destruction of the temple. That's why it was pressing, that was a pressing issue. Jesus brought them right back to it. End time signs here they are, the destruction of the temple, 70 A.D.. But but guys, there's something coming far sooner than that. There's something you guys need to be prepped for far sooner than that. And that's persecution. It's going to start just four chapters into the Book of Acts.

[00:28:43] Well, verse 13, I guess, before we do verse 13, you could ask the question, why would the Lord allow that?

[00:28:56] Why would the Lord allow the early church to be persecuted like that and hassled by court appearances, if you will? Well, the same reason that he does for us and the same reason that he'll do it during the tribulation period.

[00:29:16] He does it for kingdom promotion.

[00:29:24] That's what verse 13 is all about. Why is this stuff going to happen? Why is the church going to be persecuted? Why is the church going to be brought before rulers to answer for their faith? It's because God wants that audience. He wants to put his gospel message on big stages. That means before the VIP's of the world, before governors, before presidents, God wants that kind of airplay for the gospel message. He wanted that for the disciples in the early church. He wants that for you and I today. And it's it's going to be something that's going to take place during the tribulation period as well. He wants these disciples to know what lies ahead for them. This is one of those occasions where the Olivet discourse is layers deep, isn't it? Because I just told you he brought them back to the immediate future. He is not talking end time prophecy right here. And yet you'd be foolish to miss how well this connects with us and how well this connects with what is described for the Jew during the tribulation period and the believer in Christ during the tribulation period. So this is layers deep, even though Jesus is speaking about the immediate future of the disciples, I think this is layers deep and I think this speaks absolutely to every Christian that has ever walked the Earth and certainly to those to those believers that come around after the rapture and lived through that tribulation period. We refer to them as tribulation saints.

[00:31:21] So verse 13, but it, referring to persecution and legal battles, but it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. And the word testimony there is translated from the Greek word marturion or marturios from which we get our English word martyr or martyrdom. And do you realize that the word simply means to give a witness, to give a testimony, to testify to, you know, that that's what the word martyr means? That's all that means to witness and testify. But we have associated that word, martyr or martyrdom with being killed for your faith, don't we? Isn't that what you think of when you hear that word or those words? Me too. It's only that way because martyrdom, giving your witness, being a testimony to your faith can't be done in any greater or more final way than you laying down your life for the sake of your faith. So that's why those words have become associated like that to us. But martyrdom simply means to give a witness. He tells them right there it's going to give you an occasion for martyrdom. That's what that that's the way that reads literally. And in the disciples would say, gee, thanks a lot, Lord. I don't like the sound of that. It's going to give you an opportunity to testify, your persecution, your court cases, because of your faith.

[00:33:13] These are going to be wonderful opportunities for you to give your Christian witness and make the gospel of Christ known on those big stages, religious trials, the Sanhedrin governmental trials, the king of the Jews, the Roman rulers.

[00:33:36] Peter was a good example of this in Acts 4 before the Sanhedrin, Steven in Acts 7, before the Sanhedrin. The apostle Paul quite a few times. Paul went up against the Sanhedrin, he was also on trial before Felix Festus, King Agrippa and then ultimately the Emperor of Rome, Caesar Nero, who ultimately beheaded the apostle Paul because of his testimony. Were those personal testimonies from the early apostles before religious and secular rulers effective? Well, absolutely they were, because you see, when it comes to testifying, when it comes to giving your testimony about Christ, that has nothing to do with the number of souls that get saved from your testimony, that's not how God accounts success or effectiveness. That is the great thing about sharing your testimony. You can't go wrong when you share your testimony, it is effective. For some, it may be the thing that leads them to Christ and gets them saved, your testimony. But for others, your testimony may be the thing that solidifies their decision, hardens their heart and ultimately becomes the standard from which they will be judged by when they stand before the Lord. But for sure, our testimonies are always successful and effective. They always accomplish exactly what the Lord wants them to. So share away. Don't be shy. Give your testimony. Give your Christian witness. Verse 14, therefore, settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer. Verse 15 for, I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.

[00:35:54] Now, unfortunately, these two verses have become the lazy preacher's motto. They use these verses as their excuse not to prepare. They use these verses as their justification for shooting from the hip, from the pulpit, just letting it rip. No preplanning, no study, no sermon outline. Just get up there and let it rip and the Holy Spirit will take over. Well, you better hope he does. If you didn't prepare. This verse 14 and verse 15 direction that the Lord is giving us is to be used specifically, specifically when brought before courts to be tried or specifically in the face of persecution for the sake of your Christian faith. Other than that, please, if you're going to speak for the Lord, prepare, gather your thoughts, organize them, outline, prep, study to show yourself approved. Be a workman, rightly divide the word of God. Get up here and know what you're going to say. But in matters of persecution and trials for your faith, the Lord says this, don't think it out in advance. Settle it in your hearts right now. Make up your minds right now. Yes, there's heavy stuff coming down the pike, the Lord would say, but determine right now that you don't try to figure out in advance how you're going to handle those situations. Don't even bother. Just reserve to do this. Trust God when you get there. Corrie ten Boom once said God doesn't give dying grace, have you heard this? God doesn't give dying grace until you're dying. There are just some things that the Lord does not provide you with until the very moment that you need it. Death is one of those things. According to Jesus in Luke, Chapter 21, so is persecution, facing persecution, and answering for your faith before rulers that have the power and the leaning to kill you because of your faith. So relax, take the pressure off, trust God to show up for you when the time is right. That is the message here. Verse 16, you will be betrayed even by parents. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers.

[00:39:06] Well, how many times, Lord, should I count the times? It's already happened. And I'm kidding, of course. You'll be betrayed by parents and brothers, relatives and friends.

[00:39:21] Now, I don't know where other countries are in this mix, but the setup for this is already happening in our country. I mean, the groundwork is being laid for this. You can now report your family and friends for

their conservative right wing posts on social media. You can report them and they can end up in Facebook jail and Twitter jail. See, this is the groundwork. This is how it starts. Turn on your family and friends. You know, if they're reporting something that doesn't line up with our radical one world Antichrist government that we're moving toward, you report them, you turn on them, you betray them and we'll deal with them. That's the right thing to do, right? Well, that's what they say. For example, just very recently here, an 18 year old named Helena Duke suspected that her mother was going off to that Washington, D.C. stop the steel rally. And her cousin submitted a video to her. And on that video, she ID'd her mom and her aunt at that rally. What did she do? She turned them in. She reported them and oh, man, she was praised. She was praised by the entire liberal movement. She was praised for having betrayed her own flesh and blood and reported them for standing up for right wing conservative values. You can call a hotline and betray your friends and family for not wearing a mask in a public place. You can call a hotline and report your friends and family for attending conservative rallies.

[00:41:35] Now, I realize this stuff is all just small potatoes right now, but during the tribulation period, it won't be.

[00:41:45] You see, there are going to be two groups kicking against the Antichrist movement during the tribulation period. That is going to be the Jews, and the post rapture, tribulation saints. Those are going to be the two groups that oppose the Antichrist agenda and movement during the tribulation period, and we're going to follow it through the Book of Revelation and we're going to see what is at stake when family and friends turn on you and turn you in for kicking against the Antichrist movement, for not having the mark, or for coming to the aid of the Jews. We're going to see that specifically, too. If you fall into any of those categories, if you're doing any of those things, if you are in the tribulation period attempting to live a life for God, your family and friends that don't follow suit, they will turn you in. And it's much more than Facebook jail and Twitter jail. It's much more than being arrested for causing a fuss at a rally. We're talking life and death stuff during the tribulation period, and that is the very thing that the groundwork is being laid for. You see how everything is moving us toward that time period? That ball is already rolling down the hill. We are moving toward that in every facet of our government, in every facet of our world that we live in. The stage is being set. Reading on, and they will put some of you, not all of you, but some of you to death. Who's he speaking to there? Primarily, in the context, he is speaking to those twelve disciples. He's speaking to those Jews that believe by faith in him at this time. And he very well could have said it like this: they will put almost all of you to death. Because that's the truth. All but one, as far as we know, all but one of the apostles was put to death for their faith. Now we're excluding Judas because he took care of matters himself. But we're talking about the rest of the apostles here. And they were all put to death except for one of them because of their faith. Andrew was crucified. Simon the zealot was crucified. Phillip, we're not sure he was either hung or crucified, for sure, he was martyred for his faith. Jude, the brother of Jesus, was crucified and shot with arrows. Peter was crucified upside down by request. That's a historical fact. He knew he was going to be crucified for his faith and he said, don't crucify me in the same way that my lord was crucified. I'm not worthy of that. He requested to be inverted, hung upside down, and that's how he died. Inverted, hung upside down on a cross. James, the brother of John, was killed with a sword. James, the less, the one that we know less about, he was stoned and then clubbed to death. Thomas was run through with the spear. Bartholomew was flayed, skinned alive and then beheaded. Mathias, which we're not really sure he deserves to be in the group anyway, but Mathias was included by Peter, and Mathias was burned alive. And of course, then you have, as Paul would say, the one

that was born out of due season, the twelfth apostle, in my opinion, the apostle Paul, who was ultimately beheaded for his faith in Rome at the hands of Caesar Nero. All of them but the apostle John died martyrs deaths. And believe me, they tried to kill John multiple, multiple times. They threw him in a cauldron of boiling oil. Only everything that they tried to do to him just didn't stick, wouldn't take. He didn't die from the boiling pot of oil, so they banned him to Patmos. It was a godforsaken Rock Island, now it's pretty today, it's got life today, but you can't let that fool you. At the time it was like Alcatraz. You put prisoners there. It was a barren rock. There was no food. There was no fresh water. He was not supposed to survive that. It was on the island of Patmos that Jesus gave John the revelation, the Book of Revelation. And John came back and was the only apostle that we know of to die of old age. So you they will put some of you to death. Indeed.

[00:46:57] Indeed.

[00:46:59] And again, we see this in levels. Does this apply to the tribulation period? It does. I mean, it applies even before the pre-tribulation signs begin. There have been plenty of people martyred, put to death for their Christian witness. It is happening all over the globe. In the last decade, there has never been a time where more Christians were put to death for their faith than the last 10 years. We just don't understand it because we're in America and that isn't happening yet, but it's happening all over the world, but especially during the tribulation period, because how do things go in the tribulation period?

[00:47:45] When mommy dearest and daddy dearest.

[00:47:50] Well, that sounds weird to call daddy dearest, mommy dearest and the old man and the brother and the family and friends.

[00:47:58] When they turn you in, when they turn you over, what happens to you because of your faith? You renounce it or you die. You lose your witness or you lose your head. Those are your options.

[00:48:14] So absolutely, this applies to the tribulation period as well. Verse 17, you will be hated by all for my name sake.

[00:48:24] Without a doubt. Without a doubt.

[00:48:29] That was demonstrably true for the early church. It's true for us today. And it is going to be demonstrably true during the time of the tribulation period for both the Jews and the believing Gentiles in Christ.

[00:48:48] So here's the message.

[00:48:52] You're going to be hated for my namesake. In other words, don't take it personally. It's not you. It's him.

[00:49:02] They hate you because they hate him.

[00:49:06] They are Antichrist in their heart. And that puts them at odds with you and that makes you the visible representation of Christ, the physical thing that they can take their hostility and animosity out on. You're the representative of Christ. You stand in proxy of him on this earth.

[00:49:28] So just remember this, if you come to those time periods in the future where your neck is on the line for your witness, remember what Jesus said and do this.

[00:49:45] Don't take it personally. Be a man of God. Be a woman of God.

[00:49:53] Lay your neck down on the chopping block, sharpen the ax for him. And on behalf of Christ, you give your life, remembering what he did on your behalf. He gave his life on your behalf. He took your sins. He took your death, he took your punishment, and he died on the cross to give you his life, so he did that on behalf of you. How about if the time ever comes, you have the guts to lay down your life on behalf of him. Taking his reproach because he took your sins, giving his testimony, because he gave it to you in the first place.

[00:50:39] It's not about who you are. Verse 17, it's not about who you are. It's about whose you are.

[00:50:49] You're his, they hate him. Verse 18, but not a hair of your head shall be lost.

[00:51:02] Well, that promise didn't work out for me, so he must just be talking to the disciples here. Not a hair of your head will be lost. Hang on a minute, Lord, what are you trying to say? You just told us that many of us would be killed for our faith. And what you meant by that was all but one of us. Now, just a few verses later, you're saying not a hair of your head shall be lost. Is that a contradiction?

[00:51:39] Did the Lord mess up when he spoke that?

[00:51:46] Of course not. All the Lord is saying here is that well, it's a euphemism is what it is, it's a euphemism to say that no damage can come to you eternally. You remember what Jesus taught us early in the gospels, Matthew, chapter 10, verse 28.

[00:52:11] Do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul, but rather fear him, God, who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. So, your enemies may yank out your hair on Earth, or your kids may do that for you as you're raising them, hair today, gone tomorrow, you may lose it. Your enemies may cut off some digits. You may lose your head, you may lose your life, but eternally, you will be completely restored. You're not going to go into heaven incomplete. Tammy was right, Butch has an all new kidney, all those hairs that Butch lost, he has them now.

[00:53:04] Man, just another reason I want to go to heaven.

[00:53:08] I always wanted to have long hair and my dad wouldn't let me, I'm going to get that chance in heaven. He said, you can't look like a girl. I'm going to get there one day. My day's coming.

[00:53:20] Now, that concept leads us naturally into our thinking, into our thoughts about the doctrine of the resurrection of every single body, because this is true on that level as well. The day is coming, and we've just spoken about this recently so I won't dwell on this, but the day is coming when those that have died in Christ, those that have preceded us up into heaven like Butch, the day is coming when the Lord reunites them with their body, finds every cell, you remember this? Finds every atom, every hair that was lost, everything that belongs to you that's now fertilizer or whatever. Everything that belongs to you, the Lord perfects it and glorifies it and reunites your spirit with that body and you become a complete person, completely perfect and glorified. You go from mortality to immortality, corruption to incorruption, the Lord pieces that all back together. So this is another example of that very thing. Verse 19, let's finish, worship team, come on up. Verse 19, by your patience, possess your souls. Some of us are in big trouble. You definitely need to go in the rapture because I mean if this is how it works, by your patience, possess your souls. Some of you can't even wait fifteen minutes and then take out line.

[00:54:56] You're in trouble.

[00:54:58] Church patience brings peace. Patience brings peace. Surrender brings serenity.

[00:55:08] Surrender to who? Exactly what the Lord is telling us here, for the first century believer in Christ that was about to face deadly persecution and city wide destruction for the 2021 Christian that has perhaps entered the precursory pre tribulation signs, Jesus says Possess your soul. Let me give that to you in slang, Possess Your Soul. Here's the slang, get a grip. Get a grip. How do you get a grip during troublesome times? How do you get a grip when the signs around us are amplifying and intensifying? How do you get a grip? You

be patient, you fall back on what you know the Lord is going to do. You look up because your redemption draws nigh. You be patient. You wait upon the sovereignty of God and that's how you get a grip. Will you stand with me? Patience. Oh, man, how we need to hear this, patience. Every Christian, I think, greatly desires patience. And yet vehemently resists what produces patience. What is it? Suffering, trial, tribulation, trouble, testing. There's no way around it. You can't read a book and develop godly patience. James Chapter 1 verses 2-4. My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials. Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience, but let patience have its perfect work that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. Surely James didn't mean that, did he? Count it all joy when you enter times of suffering and testing? What did Paul have to say about that?

[00:57:24] Well, you might want to sit down for this. He said the same thing. Romans Chapter 5 versus 3-5, and not only that, but we also glory in tribulations. Boy, Paul was out there, wasn't he? We glory in tribulations. Knowing the tribulation produces perseverance or patience. And perseverance, character. And character, hope. And hope does not disappoint. Biblical hope does not disappoint. So church get a grip, patiently wait on the Lord.

[00:58:04] Watch the signs, listen for the sound. Because real soon we're out of here. We're out of here, the Lord is going to take us home. Let's pray.