

A Study Guide to "2nd S. in Advent (OWS) 12.7.69" Sermon

Overview of Key Themes

This sermon, delivered on the second Sunday in Advent, draws heavily from 2 Timothy 3:12-17. It addresses the inevitability of persecution for those who live a godly life in Christ Jesus, contrasting this with the misconception of an "uninterrupted peace" for Christians. The sermon then provides guidance on how believers can endure such persecution, emphasizing the foundational role of Holy Scripture and the examples of Christ and the Apostle Paul. It highlights the divine inspiration and multi-faceted profitability of Scripture for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.

I. Sermon Structure and Content Breakdown

A. Introduction (Grace, Scripture Reading, and Advent Context)

Opening greeting: Grace and peace from God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Scripture Text: 2 Timothy 3:12-17.

Connection to Advent: While Advent prepares for Christmas, the sermon's gospel reading focuses on signs preceding Christ's second coming and the need for watchfulness.

Central Question: How can we face the "signs of the times" and endure tribulations without Bethlehem (Christ's first coming)? Bethlehem makes enduring all things possible.

Introduction of Main Theme: Persecution as a sign of the times for Christ's followers.

B. The Inevitability of Persecution for Christians

Paul's Message to Timothy: Expect persecution, don't avoid it.

Misconception of Christian Life: The belief that becoming a Christian guarantees "uninterrupted peace."

Clarification: Peace with God (through Christ's redemption) is assured, but not necessarily peace with man, especially those who oppose truth.

Paul's Example: Written from his last Roman imprisonment, Paul's life was marked by service and success, but also many persecutions. He advises Timothy (and all believers) to expect the same.

Biblical Support: Matthew's Gospel: "Ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."

Paul's personal experiences (from Acts): Opposition from Jewish leaders, inciting bitterness, stoning, and divine protection.

Forms of Persecution :Satan's varying tactics, but consistent purpose: oppose, persecute, destroy faith.

Contempt for purity of doctrine and practice (e.g., insistence on full agreement for fellowship).

Contempt for scriptural positions (e.g., church and state, liberalism, unionism).

Silent contempt or loud condemnation.

Avoiding Persecution vs. Denying Truth:Caution in speech/conduct is necessary, but not to "court persecution."

Crucially, one must not deny the truth by silence, as this leads to denial by God.

Churches focused on compromise or social activities, neglecting doctrine, avoid persecution by succumbing to Satan's influence.

Importance of bold confession of truth and purity of doctrine/practice.

C. Enduring Persecution: The Means and Examples

Reliance on the Word of God:Paul's instruction to Timothy: "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of."

Timothy's upbringing: Faith passed down from grandmother Lois and mother Eunice.

Application to believers: Prize Christian training from home and faithful pastors.

The Word as a "sure foundation" against attacks on belief.

Examples of Endurance:Our Lord Jesus Christ: The ultimate example of enduring vicious opposition.

Apostle Paul and Co-workers: Paul's steadfastness despite challenges (e.g., "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel").

Application: Do not give up when faced with loveless, bitter, or hostile reactions. Take strength from the Word and these examples.

The Nature and Profitability of Holy Scripture: Inspiration of God: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (verbal inspiration, Genesis to Revelation). This is foundational for salvation and discerning truth.

Profitability: Doctrine: Learning the truth amidst confusion.

Reproof: Knowing how to identify and oppose error.

Correction: Seeing faults, improving oneself, and pleasing God.

Instruction in Righteousness: Guiding a life that sets an example and withstands attacks.

Goal: "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Victory in Persecution: Clinging to the Word provides comfort, strength, and power.

Believers will be victorious and can "rejoice in the midst of persecution" – a concept incomprehensible to the world.

Quoting Peter: "If ye be reproached for the sake of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."

D. Conclusion

Expect, be ready for, and prepare to endure persecution.

Victory and joy are possible through the pure and true Word of God.

Prayer for God's abundant grace and peace.

II. Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

According to the sermon, what is a common misconception Christians might have about their life after becoming a believer, and how does the sermon correct this?

From which book and chapter of the Bible is the main text for the sermon taken? What key declaration does this passage make about Scripture?

Name two specific forms of persecution mentioned in the sermon, beyond general hatred.

Why does the sermon warn against trying to avoid persecution by remaining silent about the truth?

What distinction does the sermon make between a Christian's peace with God and their peace with other people?

How did the Apostle Paul's own life experiences support his message to Timothy about persecution? Provide one example.

What does the sermon identify as the "first and foremost" way for Christians to endure persecution?

Besides the Apostle Paul, who is presented as the supreme example of enduring persecution?

List three of the four ways the sermon states that "all scripture" is profitable.

How does the sermon suggest Christians can achieve victory and even joy in the midst of persecution, a concept alien to the world?

III. Quiz Answer Key

A common misconception is that a Christian's life should be one of "uninterrupted peace." The sermon corrects this by stating that while there is peace with God, there often isn't peace with man, especially those who oppose biblical truth, and persecution is to be expected.

The main text is taken from 2 Timothy, chapter 3. This passage declares that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God."

Two forms of persecution mentioned are contempt for one's insistence on purity of doctrine and practice, and contempt for one's scriptural position on church and state or on liberalism and unionism.

The sermon warns that denying the truth by silence, in an effort to avoid persecution, is a very serious matter because the Bible states that if we do not confess the Lord before men, we will be denied by God Himself.

The sermon explains that peace with God is secured through the Savior's glorious work of redemption. However, this peace does not extend to man's relationship with his

neighbor, especially when one holds fast to scripture and the other opposes the truth, often leading to bitterness and persecution.

Paul's life was marked by many persecutions, as recorded in the Book of Acts. For instance, he was stoned and left for dead in Listra, yet God protected him and gave him new strength to continue preaching the gospel, thus proving that believers can endure.

The sermon identifies turning to the Word of God for help, strength, and comfort as the "first and foremost" way for Christians to endure persecution. This involves continuing in the things learned and assured from scripture.

Besides the Apostle Paul, Our Lord Jesus Christ himself is presented as the supreme example of enduring persecution, having been viciously and vehemently opposed.

All scripture is profitable for: doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. (Any three are acceptable).

The sermon suggests that Christians can achieve victory and rejoice in the midst of persecution by clinging steadfastly to the pure and true Word of God, finding comfort, strength, and power within it. This enables a joy and resilience that the world cannot understand.

IV. Essay Format Questions

Discuss the sermon's argument for why persecution is an expected experience for Christians, rather than an exception. How does the sermon use both biblical teaching and the Apostle Paul's life to support this point?

Analyze the sermon's explanation of how "Bethlehem" (Christ's first coming) connects to the ability to endure the signs preceding Christ's second coming and the trials of life.

Explain the concept of "inspiration of God" as presented in the sermon. How does this understanding of Scripture make it "profitable" in the four ways described (doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness)?

Compare and contrast the sermon's advice on how to navigate speech and conduct to avoid "courting persecution" with its strong warning against denying the truth through silence. What is the delicate balance Christians are called to maintain?

Beyond individual reliance on Scripture, what role do Christian upbringing, faithful teachers, and the examples of biblical figures play in the sermon's strategy for enduring persecution?

V. Glossary of Key Terms

Advent: The holy season in the church year, preceding Christmas, which prepares hearts for a God-pleasing observance of Christ's birth.

Bethlehem: Refers to the birth of Jesus Christ, symbolizing His first coming and the foundation for salvation and endurance in the face of tribulation.

Christ Crucified: A central theological concept emphasized by Paul, referring to Jesus's atoning death on the cross as the salvation for all mankind.

Contempt: Disregard or scorn, mentioned as a form of persecution, particularly for adherence to pure doctrine or scriptural positions.

Correction: One of the profits of Scripture is enabling believers to see their faults, improve themselves, and become more pleasing to God.

Doctrine: Core teachings or beliefs. Scripture is profitable for doctrine, providing truth amidst confusion.

Evil men and seducers: Those who oppose godly living, characterized by "waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," and contributing to persecution.

Fellowship: The act of sharing in common. The sermon discusses the importance of full agreement in doctrine and practice to establish true fellowship.

Godly (life in Christ Jesus): Living a life devoted to God according to Christ's teachings; according to the sermon, all who live this way "shall suffer persecution."

Inspiration of God (Verbal Inspiration): The teaching that all Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, is divinely breathed out by God, making every word perfect and true.

Instruction in righteousness: One of the profits of Scripture, guiding believers on how to lead a life that sets an example and withstands attacks, ultimately leading to the "man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Liberalism (in the church): A theological approach, viewed negatively in the sermon, that often compromises traditional doctrines and biblical authority.

Longsuffering: Patience and endurance, particularly in the face of difficulties or opposition, exemplified by the Apostle Paul.

Martyr complex: A psychological state of seeking or exaggeratedly embracing suffering or persecution, which the sermon advises against.

Persecution: Hostility and ill-treatment, especially because of religious or political beliefs; the sermon emphasizes its inevitability for godly Christians.

Prince of Peace: A title for Jesus Christ, referring to His establishment of peace between God and man, though not necessarily between man and man.

Purity of doctrine and practice: The uncorrupted and faithful adherence to biblical teachings and their application, a reason for which Christians may face contempt.

Redemption: Christ's work of saving humanity from sin and its consequences, leading to peace between God and man.

Reproof: One of the profits of Scripture, enabling believers to identify and oppose error and falsehood.

Salvation: Deliverance from sin and its consequences, achieved through faith in Christ Jesus, for which holy scriptures are able to make one wise.

Second Coming: The future return of Jesus Christ, preceded by various "signs of the times" mentioned in the gospel reading.

Satan's wiles: The deceptive tactics and strategies used by Satan to oppose and destroy faith, leading Christians to succumb to compromise rather than endure persecution.

Scriptural position on church and state: A stance based on biblical principles regarding the relationship between religious and governmental authorities, which may be regarded as "outmoded" by many.

Timothy: Paul's spiritual son and successor, to whom the second letter of Paul (the sermon's main text) is addressed, receiving instruction on enduring persecution.

Trials and tribulations: Difficulties and sufferings, which the sermon connects to the signs of the times and the Christian experience.

Unionism: A practice in the church (viewed negatively in the sermon) that emphasizes unity or fellowship across doctrinal differences, often seen as compromising truth.

NotebookLM can be inaccurate; please double check its responses.