

This briefing document summarizes the key themes and important ideas from the provided excerpts of "2nd S. in Advent (OWS) 12.7.69.mp3," focusing on the nature of Christian life, especially in the face of persecution.

Briefing: The Christian Life and Enduring Persecution

The provided sermon, based on 2 Timothy 3:12-17, offers a robust theological framework for understanding and enduring persecution as a fundamental aspect of the Christian life. It emphasizes the sufficiency of Holy Scripture as a guide and source of strength, particularly in times of adversity.

Main Themes:

The Inevitability of Persecution for Godly Living:

The core message is that persecution is not an exception but an expected reality for those who live faithfully in Christ. The sermon directly quotes 2 Timothy 3:12: "Yay. And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." This is presented as a universal truth for believers, contrary to the misconception that Christian life should be one of "uninterrupted peace." The speaker clarifies that while peace with God is achieved through Christ's redemption, conflict with humanity, especially those who oppose biblical truth, is inevitable. Paul's own life, marked by "many persecutions," serves as the primary example, reminding Timothy and all Christians "not to be surprised if that happens to him."

Persecution's Diverse Forms and Satan's Purpose:

Persecution is not limited to physical violence but takes "various forms." The sermon notes that "Satan is too shrewd to deal in the same manner with all people." These forms can include:

"Contempt for one's insistence on purity of doctrine and practice."

"Contempt for one's scriptural position on church and state."

"Contempt for one's position based on the Bible concerning liberalism and unionism." The underlying purpose of Satan in employing these tactics, regardless of form, "remains the same. To oppose, to persecute, and if possible, to destroy the faith that the Holy Spirit has implanted in that heart."

The Danger of Compromise to Avoid Persecution:

The sermon strongly condemns the idea that Christians can, or should, try to avoid persecution by compromising their faith or remaining silent. It refutes the notion that "if you are careful what you say, when and to whom you can avoid persecution." Such an approach is seen as a denial of truth, leading to a state where churches "no longer make bold confession to the truth and no longer be interested in purity of doctrine and practice." These compromised entities "don't have to fear persecution because they have long succumbed to Satan's ways." The speaker stresses, "we dare not deny the truth by our silence. Because

the Bible makes it very plain that if we will not confess the Lord before men, we will be denied by God himself."

Holy Scripture as the Foundation for Endurance:

The primary means of enduring persecution is a steadfast commitment to God's Word. Paul's admonition to Timothy, "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures," is central. The scriptures are "able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." This foundational understanding of scripture, often rooted in childhood Christian training, provides stability when beliefs are "attacked" and "convictions assailed."

The Sufficiency and Profitability of Scripture:

The sermon elaborates on the vital characteristics of Holy Scripture:

Inspiration: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." This means it is "perfect, true each and every word."

Profitability:

It is "profitable for doctrine," providing truth in a world of "doctrinal chaos." It is also "for reproof," enabling believers to identify and oppose "error and falsehood." Furthermore, it is "for correction," helping individuals address "faults and shortcomings," and "for instruction in righteousness," guiding believers to lead a "God-pleasing" life and be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Examples of Endurance:

Believers are encouraged to draw strength from the examples of others who have endured persecution. Foremost is "our Lord himself" who was "opposed and persecuted viciously and vehemently." The Apostle Paul also serves as a powerful example, demonstrating perseverance even after being stoned and left for dead. These examples reinforce the idea that enduring "for Christ's sake" is possible through God's grace and protection.

Joy and Victory in Persecution:

Despite the challenges, the sermon concludes with a triumphant note. By clinging to God's Word, Christians "will be victorious. You will be able to rejoice in the midst of persecution." Quoting 1 Peter, the speaker states, "If ye be reproached...for the sake of Christ. Happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." This transforms persecution from something to be dreaded into an occasion for divine blessing and spiritual joy, something "the world couldn't begin to understand."

In summary, the sermon urges Christians to anticipate persecution, not to seek to avoid it through compromise, and to root their endurance firmly in the inspired and profitable Word of God, drawing encouragement from biblical examples of steadfast faith.