

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Theme: Endure!

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Not Much Has Changed

Bill Brinkworth

The battles and challenges Christians face today are not much different from those early Christians encountered. Little has changed.

Although people today see themselves far advanced from their early predecessors, there are remarkable similarities between New Testament and today's Christians. They are similar because of man's consistent-through-the-ages sin nature,

Paul warned Timothy (I Tim. 6:20) to keep far away from the doubting, faith-challenging science. It attempted to challenge what God would have His people believe by faith.

"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:" I Timothy 6:20

The "science" Paul referred to here was not so much the "science" we recognize today. "Science" in I Tim. 6:20 referred to man's knowledge. It was intellectualism that challenged a Christian's faith and beliefs.

Many today also believe that "knowledge" is superior to what God's Word declares. However, the Bible refers to it as "fables" (I Tim. 1:4), "vain (empty and pointless) jangling" (I Tim. 1:6), "profane and old wives fables" (I Tim. 4:7), and "vain babblings" (II Tim. 2:16). God wants all to know that man is not as wise as he thinks he is.

Man's intellect continues to question and challenge creationism, the existence of God and His involvement in His creation, life after death, and God's Word is preserved and is still with us. That we're-smarter-than-God attitude is still doing all it can to question and ridicule Christianity's principles and beliefs. However, despite incorrect thinking, God's way will "work" with modern man.

Early Christians also had to deal with unbiblical religion and traditions. Today's Christians are still dealing with false teachings.

“... ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.” Mark 7:8 Also: Mat. 15:2, Mat. 15:3, 6.

It is man's philosophy, mixed with God's way, that waters down the truths and power of God's commandments (Mat. 15:6). Man's ideas and beliefs that contradict the Word of God have often weakened Christianity. To make it even harder to live the Christian way, those who call themselves “religious” or “Christian” often become stumbling blocks and the enemies of true Bible-believing and obeying Christians.

Man, then and today, still has to deal with immorality. Saints in Sodom and Gomorrah had to deal with homosexuality, as do today's Christians.

False worship was just as big a problem in the Old and New Testament times as we are experiencing. Idolatry was just as much a shock to Paul as it is to modern believers when people are seen praying to idols, some even professing to be Christians.

Ungodly leaders have also been a hampering and discouraging force that opposed the open practice of Christianity. Early Christians faced the government's controlling arm under Roman rule. It was that reign that martyred thousands of Christians on Roman crosses, in their fires, and other tortures. Old Testament saints faced similar torment from the pharaohs, Shalmanesser, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, and countless other unrighteous rulers.

Many today vote for government officials. The “rulers” that get elected are often not leading their people in the way God would have them govern. The government's support of abortion, welfare without working, paying for illegitimate births and birth control, and diseases contracted from sinful behavior are some proofs of ungodly governmental authority.

It is not much easier to live a godly life today than in yesteryears. The world and its often ungodly practices, beliefs, laws, and temptations have always been a barrier to those committed to obeying God. Very few times in history has the world been a comfortable environment to live the way God would have all to live.

Hiding behind the excuse, “Well, it was easier for earlier saints and Christians than today,” is not true. There always have been difficulties and challenges for those living God's way.

It is the individual Christian's responsibility to choose correctly. Decide to reject man's philosophies, traditions, and what is popular to fit in. Determine to trust God's way of salvation and walk the narrow way God expects the believer to follow (Mat. 7:13-14). Difficulties may arise in pleasing God but obey Him, no matter what.

*“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”
Joshua 24:15*

“If you can get along with the world, then you are out of step with God.”

— Dr. Harold Sighler

I Won't!

Author Unknown

I want to let go, but I won't let go,
There are battles to fight,
By day and by night
For God and the right,
And I'll never let go.

I want to let go, but I won't let go,
I'm sick 'tis true;
Worried and blue,
And worn through and through,
But I won't let go.

I want to let go, but I won't let go,
I will never yield;
What, lie down on the field
And surrender my shield?
No! I'll never let go.

I want to let go, but I won't let go,
May this be my song,
'Mid legions of wrong;
That I may never let go.

The man who wisely said, "Be sure you're right, then go ahead," should have added, "Be sure you're wrong before you quit!"

What Did They Do?

*Bible Readings for the Home*¹

- ❖ When beaten by the Jewish rulers for preaching Christ, what did the apostles do?¹
"And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." Acts 5:41
- ❖ After receiving "many stripes" with their feet made fast in the stocks, what did Paul and Silas do while in prison? ¹
"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them." Acts 16:25
- ❖ When Jesus was nailed to the cross, what did He say?
"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots." Luke 23:34
- ❖ Even when persecuted, what are we told to do, and why?
"Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." Luke 6:22-23
- ❖ What assurance is given that the child of God may bravely endure every trial and hardship of life?

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28

- ❖ How constant should our rejoicing be?

“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.” Phil. 4:4

¹*Bible Readings for the Home, Sothern Publishing Association, Nashville, TN, 1943, Page 574-575*

“Build your nest upon no tree here; for you see God has sold the forest to Death, and every tree whereupon we rest is ready to be cut down. We must flee and build upon the Rock. Jesus is that Rock.” — Rutherford, 1661