

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Not Much Has Changed

Bill Brinkworth

The battles and challenges Christians face today are not much different than those early Christians faced; not much has changed. Although today's man sees himself far advanced from his early predecessors; because of man's consistent-through-the-ages sin nature, there are great similarities between what New Testament Christians faced, and what today's Christians are still experiencing.

Paul warned Timothy (I Tim. 6:20) to keep far away from the doubting, faith-challenging science that 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. This “knowledge” that so many believe is superior to what God's Word declares is addressed in the Bible 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 clearly wants all to know that man is not as smart as he thinks he is.

That we’re-smarter-than-God attitude is still active today and is doing all it can to question and ridicule Christianity’s principles and beliefs. Man’s intellect still questions and challenges: creationism; existence of God and His involvement in His creation; that there is life after death; that God’s Word is preserved and still with us; that God’s way will “work” with modern man, and just about everything else a Christian believes.

New Testament Christians also had to deal with unbiblical religion, and their unbiblical traditions and false teachings as we do today.

“... 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 the things of man mixed with God’s way, that water down the truths and power of God’s commandments (Mat. 15:6). Man’s ideas and philosophies that contradict what the Word of God teaches are what have always weakened Christianity. To make it even harder to live the Christian way, it is often those that call themselves “religious” or “Christian” that become the biggest stumbling block and enemy to the true Bible-believing and obeying Christian.

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 it is today. Idolatry was just as much a shock to Paul as it is to Christians today, when they see many praying to idols; some of them even professing to be Christians.

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

Many today have the opportunity to vote for government officials. The "rulers" that do get elected are quite often not leading their people in the way God would have them govern. Government's supporting of practices such as abortion, welfare without working, paying for illegitimate births and birth-control, and diseases contracted from sinful behavior, are some of the proofs of ungodly governmental control.

It is not much easier to live a godly life today, than it was in yesteryear. 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 an easy environment to live the way God would have all to live.

It was, and is today, always up to the individual Christian to make the right decision, and the sacrifices to serve the Lord, no matter what it costs him; no matter how much opposition he faces in doing so. Hiding behind the excuse, “Well, it was easier for earlier saints and Christians than it is today” is not true. There always have been difficulties and challenges for those living God’s way.

If you are a Christian, it is up to you to choose to live for the Lord and obey His commandments. Parents, teachers, peers and opposition to living a God-approved lifestyle are not excuses for living improperly. It must be your decision not to trust man’s philosophies and traditions, but rather to trust God’s way of salvation to get you to heaven. It must be your choice to walk the narrow way God has laid out for a believer; not the broad way of the masses that leads to destruction (Mat. 7:13). It must be your choice not to do what everyone else is doing, but only what the Lord would have you to do. The decision to please God by obeying him must be yours. Whom will you obey — man or God? *“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?

Bill Brinkworth

- ❖ 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 would rest is ready to be cut down, to the end we may flee and mount up, and build upon the Rock, and dwell in the holes of the Rock. Jesus is that Rock.” — Rutherford, 1661

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