

So Great A Heritage

Continued from Page 1

exposing of false teachings were so grievous to the followers of man-made worship that they ensured our Saviour was beaten, ridiculed, mocked, and eventually nailed to a cross. God allowed His Son not to escape the world's wrath and hatred for, Christians should also expect it. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you...." *John 15:19-20*

Most of us today have little understanding of what Christians before us suffered for their beliefs. Here are some reminders of the sacrifices and suffering early Christians faced for their faith and godly lifestyles:

☞ The first followers of Jesus ran for their lives as they were pursued (Acts 8) for believing and professing that Christ was risen (Acts 4:2-3) and was their Saviour. It was not unsaved, but the religious, that often initiated much of their persecutions even before A. D. 30.

☞ Saul, before he was saved, took part in the killing of the first martyr for Christ, Stephen. Saul, later renamed Paul, watched as that godly preacher was stoned to death.

☞ To believe Jesus Christ was the long-awaited Messiah cost many much in the early churches. It cost many their belongings, reputations, livelihoods, imprisonment, and even their lives.

☞ The apostles were persecuted for their beliefs, and most died because of their unflinching stands. Paul faced imprisonment, beatings, stonings, and persecution (II Corinthians 11:25).

What does your faith in Christ mean to you? Does God's Word mean so much that you read it faithfully and would not sway from its teaching? Is the price Christ paid on the cross for your salvation so precious to you that you are determined to live for Him, no matter the cost, socially or monetarily? Are the Bible's truths so important to you that you share them with others no matter the cost in time, money, or others' opinions?

Will you be willing to pay the price for your faith, no matter what it is? Many say they will die for their faith, but for most of us, God only requires that we live for Him. Are you living boldly for Him today?

The full version of this article can be found at <https://www.devotionsfromthebible.com/john/so-great-a-heritage/>

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Devoted Workers Needed!

Bill Brinkworth

It has been a challenging, exciting 43+ years of being saved and serving the Lord. During that time, there were many battles and sacrifices to preserve righteousness, souls saved from Hell, and society had some protection from many sinful influences.

Men and women quit high-paying jobs to teach the youth in Christian schools. Often, many worked at the schools for minimum pay or nothing. Christian education and to keep many from worldly false teachings were important in the minds of those believers.

Many who pioneered the Christian school movement went to jail rather than close their ministry. Hosts of young people were saved in those outreaches, and worldly, godless philosophies were kept from our precious future, our youth. Despite the world's attempts to stop the schools, many grew and saturated their communities with God's truths. Lives were changed, and

some areas dealt with less violence and sin that scarred many neighborhoods.

Preachers stood boldly behind pulpits and exposed false religious doctrines and preached God's Word truths. They stood bravely against sin, which so many were involved in, and were a tremendous influence to many.

Continued on Page 2

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Christians today, worldwide, have so much for which to be grateful. Our faith, Bible, doctrines, and freedoms were obtained at high prices paid by our Christian predecessors. It cost many their lives and much suffering, yet we take for granted what believers of the past had to pay dearly for and place little value on our godly heritage.

Believers should not be surprised if they face persecution, as their namesake, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, also received much. His righteousness and

Continued on Page 4

Devoted Workers...

Continued from Page 1

Many rebelled against those church leaders and did all they could to stop biblical teachings and those exposing unrighteousness. However, those who endured criticism and challenges often saw miraculous changes in many lives.

Ministries grew to reach as many as possible. Some outreached into dangerous neighborhoods and put themselves and their families in unpleasant situations so that the needy sinners could hear the saving words from God. Multitudes turned their lives over to Him, resulting in them being changed and improved citizens.

Some surrendered all to go to foreign and domestic mission fields. Most faced tremendous opposition. Many faced dangers, diseases, and even death. Still, those unsung heroes went and stayed and made great improvements in so many lives.!

Others got involved in their local government to stop the spread of ungodly practices. They, too, faced great opposition and chastisement. Still, they kept on despite the trials they endured.

Many of those who sacrificed what this world had to offer for what God would have them do are now fading off the scene. Disease and age are silencing their great voices that once changed lives, helped those who had little hope, rebuilt families

and relationships, and taught godly principles.

However, as their voices are no longer heard and many are going to their heavenly reward, I wonder who will pick up the burdens of those who no longer can? Where are those who will carry the torch that will illuminate the future world with godly, biblical messages and proper lifestyles? Who will fill the voids left by those that no longer can serve?

Some still obey their convictions and endure opposition so that others can hear God's message. However, their numbers are dwindling. Even fewer are those who know what God's Word commands and fewer are those who do not obey what they are shown to be His way.

Many church leaders who should stand for God's Word, ways, and truths are not. The populace's cry to halt convicting messages, to stop preaching against sin, not to go door-to-door soul-winning, and to do what everyone else is doing sways them from standing against unrighteousness.

Their message may be comfortable to sinners' ears, but God's truths are no longer pounded from many pulpits. Biblical truths and practices are often ridiculed and taught to be false and unnecessary today. Thus, few convictions against unrighteousness are experienced among churchgoers. Outreaches are limited. Workers are fewer,

and communities succumb to the wiles and ways of ungodly, unbridled behavior.

Rarer are those ministries that see the damage done by worldly public school education and support or create Christian schools. Many, including church leaders, send their children to public schools falsely believing that "I will teach them what is right at home, and they will know better than falling for the worldly teachings in the government schools."

Children are saturated with propaganda about threatening global destruction, how they have rights to do whatever they want, and that "right" is whatever they think it should be. Few hear how there is a God that can change any situation, loves them, and has great plans for them if they will only trust, obey, and follow His way.

Few surrender to serve and live for the Lord. Worldly excuses justify their not filling in the gaps from aged, ailing servants of God.

"Why, I need more money than the ministry offers. It must not be God's will for me to work in the ministry full time." The faith to trust God's provision is missing in their life. God met the needs of ministry predecessors. He can do it today if people will only trust Him.

"I can't teach that Sunday school class. The kids are so rowdy." Those people, too, are not relying on the power God gives to those who do His will.

"Go soul-winning. No way. I don't know what to say, and it could be dangerous going into some neighborhoods and homes." All have had to battle the same fear of speaking to strangers about salvation and God's will and way. However, they went, and God's grace and protection were sufficient as they will be for those who will go now!

"Ride a Sunday school bus to bring children to church? Not me. I work all week and need to have some time to myself." The bus workers of the past also had to sacrifice their time, but because of their volunteering, millions came to churches and were saved.

This world desperately needs another generation of convicted, concerned, and courageous believers. Who will step to the front and stand for God's righteousness? Whoever you are, please start now. The world must hear God's Word's saving and life-altering news today. Who will go and tell?

"If Christians do not tell the lost how to be saved from a tormenting eternity, who will?" It is the responsibility of believers to tell others how to be saved!"