

RESTORATION MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Prophetic Insight

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“Therefore we must pay much more careful heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away”

Being Our Father’s Transitional Generation! (Part 2)

2. Belonging To Jesus Means You Will Be Trouble In A Darkened World

If you belong to Jesus as Lord of your life, “stuff” happens. We see examples of it in Scripture. After Peter and John healed the crippled man in the Name of Jesus, they were brought before the hostile religious leaders: *“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus”* (Acts 4:13). In another incident religious leaders sharply accused Paul of public agitation: *“We have found this man to be a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world. He is a ringleader of the Nazarene sect”* (Acts 24:5).

When you belong to Jesus as the Foundation upon which your faith practices — the infrastructure of your way of life — are established, “stuff” will happen! When you’re freed from the complacent influence of Hellenism and Romanism and Nicolaitanism which has formerly ordered your spiritual life, you stand out as spiritual light in the midst of a world sorely dominated by darkness. You need to understand that every generation of people who claim to belong to Jesus gets tested by trials — **fire**: *“If anyone builds on this foundation [Jesus Christ] using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is... It will be **revealed with fire**, and the **fire will test** the quality of each person’s work”* (1Corinthians 3:12,13).

It’s essential for your emotional and spiritual well-being that you firmly register this: that belonging to Jesus as His own won’t make you popular among people who are enmeshed in the world systems nor will it bring you the admiration of people looking for worldly prestige and success in your life. Instead, the very presence of the Holy Spirit in you makes you a **“troubler”** to those living in sin. Not only does their penchant for sin rile them to aversion to you; your relationship with them is made even worse by the presence of demonic strongholds agitating them to view you as a threat, a **“troubler.”** And it may surprise you that you’re going to experience that reaction far more among people within Christendom than with those outside it.

Here’s how it happens: Once a “Christian” you know chooses to remain in the darkness of their unconfessed sin, they begin developing an emotional wedge between you and them. It surfaces in their disparaging innuendos about you: “You’re too fanatical!” “You’re too narrow minded!” “The Bible can be interpreted many ways — be flexible!” The emotional wall of separation they’re erecting will increase to the point where they ostracize you, cutting you off completely. If it’s because of your righteous devotion to Jesus that you’re being excluded, then you’re a **“troubler.”** Be glad of it!

Think of the great company you’re keeping over the centuries, even before Jesus **troubled** the religious leaders of His day. You have a connection with Elijah after he prayed for the rain to stop: *“When [Ahab] saw Elijah, he said to him, ‘Is that you, you **troubler** of Israel?’”* (1Kings 18:17). *“Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops”* (James 5:17,18).

We share this point about being **trouble** for two reasons:

1. To encourage you to not shrink back from wholeheartedly representing Jesus in your loving obedience; and don't shrink from confronting those who call themselves "Christian" and yet live in sin (Hebrews 10:38). They are defaming YOUR Lord!
2. So you'll be careful when you hear other people being disparaged because of their faith walk. You may find yourself listening to the sinner slander the resolute determination of a brother or sister.

Jesus foresaw the **trouble** His followers would be, especially to the religious establishment. So He warned them (and us) in advance of the difficulties His followers would experience, and the way in which He wanted them to respond:

"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me" (Matthew 5:10,11).

"They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God" (John 16:2).

"Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them" (Luke 6:27-29).

Our Lord isn't giving us suggestions or recommendations; He's giving us commands. And, notice that He's not giving you a delay period until you feel like you can bless people who persecute or mistreat you. The readiness and willingness to forgive and bless others is one of the most distinguishing factors of someone who truly belongs to Jesus.



Let's look at another example, Stephen, the first martyr for Christ. What kind of man was Stephen, and what made him **trouble** among the religious establishment? *"Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people" (Acts 6:8).*

Because of the indwelling Holy Spirit working so mightily through him, opposition arose against Stephen: *"But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke" (Acts 6:10).* The opposition was so great they had to kill him. But in keeping with our Lord's command "to bless." Stephen chose the only response ALL our Lord's followers must have:



"While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he fell on his knees and cried out, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:59,60).

When you're told to do something by our heavenly Father that you know will be **trouble, how do you respond?**

The day after our Lord showed us we were going to live in Israel with our close friends, I (Mike) got up early the next morning. I knelt down in front of our sofa and placed my Bible on it. It opened to Jeremiah 1:17-19. By the very nature of the words I knew we weren't going on a vacation. The first indicator that we would be writers came as a result, in part, of my moth-

er's prophetic words just before we left for Israel in 1993: "When you get back from Israel, the Lord wants you to move in with me and write." Next, we received a note from a man in up-state New York whom we'd never met. When he heard from mutual friends that we had left our retreat ministry and were going to live in Jerusalem for a while, he wrote, "The Lord is sending you on a prophetic mission. Please fax me whatever He reveals to you."

Several weeks after we arrived in Israel we attended a prayer conference in Jerusalem. A pastor from Memphis who didn't know us walked up and put his hand on Mike's shoulder and revealed the answers to two prayers about which we had told no one else. That got our attention! He then added, "Brother, do you know that the Lord brought you here so that you could go back to the United States with a prophetic message?"

As our departure from Israel drew nearer in 1994 to carry the prophetic message of the Hebraic foundations back to the United States, we were warned by Israeli friends who loved Messiah Jesus: "**You're going back to the hardest place on earth for this message to be received. Christians there don't need God and they don't need each other.**" We also realized that we were going back to a nation in which Hellenism had so heavily influenced the organized religious establishment that few were going to welcome the Hebraic foundations.

Lastly, to confirm the Hebraic foundations our Father gave us, we journeyed to a small, rustic retreat center near Latrun, a few miles outside Jerusalem. About 4 AM on our final morning there I (Mike) ventured into the simple, rock-hewn chapel to cry out to God about why He had chosen us to share the Hebraic foundations. I poured my heart out, reminding Him of how much I'd failed Him in my life. Suddenly His Spirit directed me to a little devotional book on a nearby chair. I opened it to the lesson for that day: "**Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for Us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'"** (Isaiah 6:8). Sobbing, I whispered, "You do this to everyone You recruit, don't You!" Only the grace of our Lord and King can soften a heart, penetrate dull ears, and open blind eyes so that anyone can experience His forgiving love and His purpose for choosing them. A repentant heart makes all the difference to our Lord!

It's the verses after Isaiah 6:8 that let us know we were going to be **trouble** as we shared what Father had given us:

"He said, 'Go and tell this people: "Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving." Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed'" (Isaiah 6:9,10).

For more on these issues, see **TODAY! What Would Jesus Be Doing If He Were You?** Insight 13. "Collectively Becoming The Family Of Lord Jesus (Part 2)"

<<http://www.restorationministries.org/download/13.wwwjd.pdf>>.

If you're part of the **Transitional Generation** that has fled the Hellenist, Romanist, Nicolaitan systems, we encourage you to focus inward on the Holy Spirit so you can clearly hear and perceive what our Father is restoring to His children in Jesus. Ask His Spirit to confirm for you if these truths are His and in accordance with His Word. And, one last caution: Be careful that you are not the recipient of disparaging comments about others who have become **trouble** to the religious establishment. Remember this important warning: "*The first to state his case seems right, till the other one comes and cross-examines*" (Proverbs 18:17).

Before you listen to disparaging comments about the faith walk of someone, or utter them yourselves, take a lesson from this news headline and story written from the perspective of the “establishment”:

BREAKING NEWS:

Seventy-Two Killed Resisting Gun Confiscation In Massachusetts.

National Guard units seeking to confiscate a cache of recently banned assault weapons were ambushed by elements of a para-military extremist faction. Military and law enforcement sources estimate that 72 were killed and more than 200 injured before government forces were compelled to withdraw. Speaking after the clash, Massachusetts Governor Thomas Gage declared that the extremist faction, which was made up of local citizens, has links to the radical right-wing tax protest movement.

Gage blamed the extremists for recent incidents of vandalism directed against internal revenue offices. The governor, who described the group’s organizers as “criminals,” issued an executive order authorizing the summary arrest of any individual who has interfered with the government’s efforts to secure law and order. The military raid on the extremist arsenal followed widespread refusal by the local citizenry to turn over recently outlawed assault weapons.

Gage issued a ban on military-style assault weapons and ammunition earlier in the week. This decision followed a meeting early this month between government and military leaders at which the governor authorized the forcible confiscation of illegal arms. One government official, speaking on condition of anonymity, pointed out that “none of these people would have been killed had the extremists obeyed the law and turned over their weapons voluntarily.”

Government troops initially succeeded in confiscating a large supply of outlawed weapons and ammunition. However, troops attempting to seize arms and ammunition in Lexington met with resistance from heavily-armed extremists who had been tipped off regarding the government’s plans. During a tense standoff in the Lexington town park, National Guard Colonel Francis Smith, commander of the government operation, ordered the armed group to surrender and return to their homes. The impasse was broken by a single shot, which was reportedly fired by one of the right-wing extremists.

Eight civilians were killed in the ensuing exchange. Ironically, the local citizenry blamed government forces rather than the extremists for the civilian deaths. Before order could be restored, armed citizens from surrounding areas had descended upon the guard units. Colonel Smith, finding his forces over matched by the armed mob, ordered a retreat. Governor Gage has called upon citizens to support the state/national joint task force in its effort to restore law and order. The governor also demanded the surrender of those responsible for planning and leading the attack against the government troops. **Samuel Adams, Paul Revere, and John Hancock**, who have been identified as “ringleaders” of the extremist faction, remain at large, April 20, 1775.

As spiritual and moral darkness spreads **NOW** is the time to stand up in righteous and loving trust as a *patriot of heaven* and *servant of our Lord Jesus*. And be glad when someone describes you as a **troubler** amid the religiously complacent who enjoy the status quo. Remember that Elijah, Jesus, Peter, John and Paul were all **trouble** makers. You’re in great company!