

Moral Within or Without Moral

Richard highlighted two types of persecutions that we can face.

1) Persecution for righteousness.

As Steven has taken a stand for righteousness, division/persecution so to speak, has come in his family due to differences of belief even though they're Christians; they've charted out different belief systems. Matthew 10:34-39 shows this clearly; "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword [of division between belief and unbelief]. For I have come to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS [own] HOUSEHOLD[when one believes and another does not]." He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross [expressing a willingness to endure whatever may come] and follow Me [believing in Me, conforming to My example in living and, if need be, suffering or perhaps dying because of faith in Me] is not worthy of Me. Whoever finds his life [in this world] will [eventually] lose it [through death], and whoever loses his life [in this world] for My sake will find it [that is, life with Me for all eternity]."

- Matthew 5:10; "Blessed [comforted by inner peace and God's love] are those who are persecuted for doing that which is morally right, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven [both now and forever]."
- I Corinthians 4:12; "We work [for our living], working hard with our own hands. When we are reviled and verbally abused, we bless. When we are persecuted, we take it patiently and endure."
- 2 Timothy 3:12; "Indeed, all who delight in pursuing righteousness and are determined to live godly lives in Christ Jesus will be hunted and persecuted [because of their faith]."
- 2 Corinthians 4:8-12; "We are pressured in every way [hedged in], but not crushed; perplexed [unsure of finding a way out], but not driven to despair; hunted down and persecuted, but not deserted [to stand alone]; struck down, but never destroyed; always carrying around in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the [resurrection] life of Jesus always may be shown in our body. For we who live are constantly [experiencing the threat of] being handed over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the [resurrection] life of Jesus also may be evidenced in our mortal body [which is subject to death]. So physical death is [actively at work in us, but [spiritual] life [is actively at work] in you."

2) Secular persecution for moral failure / unrighteous living

When a believer has a moral failure, it's not something that caught them by surprise; they chose to disobey God as we studied this last week. There may be repentance, but that person has become an open target for 'persecution' from without and within. This is what we see with Marshall towards David Briar, the casting of stones! He's just milking the story for all it's worth. It's similar to the story of King David, even though he repented for his adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband, there were still consequences to his moral failure; his son that was born out of adultery died and his kingdom was torn from him and divided into two. It couldn't just be swept under the carpet. As a matter of fact, in 2 Samuel 16:5-13, David himself realizes that his sins were open to public scrutiny and persecution when Shimei cursed him out. [Read the story here](#). Shimei was like Marshall. He was trumpeting David's sin to everyone. It was V.I.P. News with Shimei! David knew he was wrong and had sinned privately and publically and now it was being shouted from the rooftops, because now his son, who now wants to be king, has taken over his household and is sleeping with David's concubines on his rooftop before all the world to see. The word says that the sword would never leave David's house as a result, 2 Samuel 12:9-11. There is a very big difference between persecution for RIGHTEOUSNESS and secular persecution for MORAL FAILURE. This doesn't just refer to sexual sin, it could be any type of moral failure or unrighteous living that has brought you to the place you are today. If you've repented, the Lord has forgiven, but there may still be consequences to endure. Once again, this is not persecution for righteousness sake, but for moral failure.

A few other nuggets that we've read about in today's message are:

- Steven and Bob Mylon have developed a close brotherly friendship, like that of King David and Jonathan. Psalm 133 says; "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil [of consecration] poured on the head, coming down on the beard, even the beard of Aaron, coming down upon the edge of his [priestly] robes [consecrating the whole body]. It is like the dew of [Mount] Hermon coming down on the hills of Zion; For there the Lord has commanded the blessing: life forevermore." Where there is unity, there is a consecrating anointing. Steven and Bob stick it out together and they see God work on their behalf.
- We see an angelic manifestation. Hebrews 13:2 says; "Do not neglect to extend hospitality to strangers [especially among the family of believers – being friendly, cordial, and gracious, sharing the comforts of your home and doing your part generously], for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it." The taxi driver/angel was sent to minister and strengthen Steven at a very weak time and he was encouraged.
- Lastly, Romans 8:28 says; "And we know [with great confidence] that God [who is deeply concerned about us] causes all things to work together [as a plan] for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to His plan and purpose."
- Go and sin no more; do things God's way and in serving Him...it will go well; if you cover up ...it will not go well. Walk upright before God. Micah 6:8; "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you except to be just, and to love [and to diligently practice] kindness (compassion), and to walk humbly with your God [setting aside any overblown sense of importance of self-righteousness]".

