

LENT DEVOTION

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We now live in a time and age which is called "Post-Modernism." It is a culture which celebrates 'Relativism' in which there is no place for 'absolutes.' That means, no one can claim that he alone has the truth because there is no such thing as "unchanging truth" that exists. In fact, the truth changes along with the times and according to a particular situation and need. And thus, the 'relativistic culture' says: "Whatever is truth to you need not be truth to me - and whatever is truth to me need not be truth to you.

"But for a person of 'righteousness' the truth is not dependent upon the situation, circumstances, culture and time. Since "all truth is God's Truth" and since God does not change, the Truth also does not change. Truth is dependent upon the character and standards of God. So for a righteous-person the truth - that is, the moral, ethical, civil, and ceremonial truth - never ever changes. As such, a righteous person is always under attack and potential persecution - either literally or emotionally and psychologically. But a believer should not be discouraged by such persecution. Jesus Himself has said: "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:10).

Becoming the citizen of and being in the Kingdom of Heaven is, of course, a privilege. The kingdom is not something earned, it is a gift. It belongs to those who like the children exhibit utter dependence and trust in God. Jesus said: "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14). "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3). A righteous person not only has a 'poor in spirit' attitude and humility but also has the courage and boldness to stand strong in the midst of persecution.

Persecution is not something 'new' that came in just now in the present times. The Church has been subjected to severe persecution since its beginning, God's chosen ones (including the nation Israel) has been persecuted for several centuries. Persecution has become more visible and the news gets around the world so quickly at the present times because of the social media and modern scientific and technological advancements. But God's children who are made righteous and who stand for righteousness in this world always stand strong even in the midst of persecution, hurt, pain and agony. In fact, the church has grown, is growing and becoming strong, and will grow in the midst of persecution and pain. That is the fact of history.