

WHEN TRIBULATION OR PERSECUTION ARISETH

Matthew 13: 20: But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 21: Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

Over the years I have experienced a little of what our Lord means by "*tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word.*" After experiencing men's hatred of God's gospel, I have been asked by well-meaning brethren, "Why preach this point since it seems to be a point of contention?" I will try to give one reason by way of illustration.

The very first subject I preached in the first message I preached was, "Behold the Lamb of God" from John 1: 36. My first point was "Behold *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*" (Rev 13: 8) I declared that all spiritual blessings God gives his people in time, he gave us in eternity in Christ. Those blessings were accomplished because when Christ agreed to be our Surety, in the unchangeable purpose of God Christ was slain right then. Immediately, someone told me they were offended that I preached eternal justification in the lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

What if I had ceased preaching that scriptural truth? What if every time trouble arose because of the word I ceased preaching that point of doctrine? Then I would never preach that all sinners died in Adam and are totally depraved. I never preach that Christ made atonement for a limited number of sinners that God sovereignly chose by grace, not based on anything in the sinner. Never would I preach Christ our Sanctification, renouncing the lie of progressive sanctification which says sinners begin in the Spirit through the hearing of the faithfulness of Christ but are made perfect by their flesh by hearing of works. No one to whom I preach would ever be grown in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Yet, not only would I have ceased preaching Christ and not only would those to whom I minister receive no benefit but I also would have proven myself a stony ground hearer more concerned with offending men than with offending God. This is why offended men do not offend me so as to change my message!