

Hebrews 10:32-36 - Standing With and Preparing For

Intro - We won't be in Rev. the new 3 weeks - stand alone messages. Next week is the Lord's Supper, the week after is Labor Day and I prefer to keep finish last chapter of Rev. intact - one block of messages. This week is going to be a standalone message and a different kind of message (I like mixing things up).

The title is "Standing With and Preparing For" and it is derived from some of the news about churches in our land. It has been common place, throughout my lifetime, to hear Christians in public and private thank God for the privilege we have in this country to peacefully meet on Sundays for church. Religious freedom is a tremendous liberty that we enjoy in our country...but that seems to be changing

We are going to briefly look at Heb. 10 then apply it to today as I encourage you to stand with some churches that are enduring difficulties and then also to prepare for some difficulties of our own

HEBREWS 10:32-36

- 10:32 - Encouraged to remember when they were first converted - new Christians
 - o They received light (coming to faith is going from darkness to light - light of world)
 - o endured conflict/suffering (various kinds of conflict/trouble mentioned)
- 10:33 - "Publicly exposed to insult"
 - o Gr. word *theatrizo* where we get "theatre" put on public display, on stage
- 10:33b - Stood side by side with those who were mistreated
 - o These Christians aligned themselves with other Christians who were enduring trouble
- 10:34 - suffered with those put in prison
 - o Probably caring for their needs. (limited care was provided by state - needed support)
- 10:34b confiscation of property
 - o they lost their stuff but they were looking forward to better stuff in eternity
- 10:36-36 there would be a reward for persevering

STANDING WITH

Let's apply the Heb. 10 passage to us today. On this very day there are churches in our land that are under the threat of fines and jail time for doing nothing more than meeting for church. (Heb. 10:24-25)

In Daniels day the government told him he couldn't pray for 30 days. He opened up his windows and prayed anyway and got throw into den. Some churches are opening up their doors in conflict with government and society. Let me mention some in particular and by name

- Pastor Courtney Lewis - Cornerstone Baptist Church - Chicago (6 min WGN radio interview)
 - o Other churches in Chicago fined and threatened with loss of property (public nuisance)

- Pastor Che Ahn - Harvest Rock Church - Pasadena - forbidden from: holding public meetings, reciting the Lord's Prayer, singing and having in home bible studies
 - Threatened with criminal penalties of: fines, 1 year in jail, and closure of church
- Pastor Jack Hibbs - Calvary Chapel in Chino Hills California
 - Made observation of results in land when doors of church closed - darkness
- Pastor John MacArthur - Grace Community Church in California
 - Given \$20,000 fine (\$1000 per day) and threat of imprisonment
- Pastor Rob McCoy - Godspeak Calvary Chapel (Newbery Park in Ventura County, California)
 - Violating restraining order placed on church/leaders/attenders
 - "the first 1000 get a prize...citation....on your record" (many showed)
- 1st Pentecostal Church in Holly Spring, Mississippi (49 second NBC video)
 - Burned to ground with message- "bet you stay home now you Hypokrits "
- Heb. 10:33 - we are to stand with those who are publicly insulted
 - Col. 4:18 - "remember my chains" 2 Tim. 1:16 - "he was not ashamed of my chains"
 - Moses chose to be mistreated along with God's people.... Heb. 11:24-25
 - Pray for these leaders (and others) that they have continued courage and wisdom

PREPARING FOR

- Enduring conflict and suffering is part of the package of Christianity Heb. 10:32
 - "God has only one Son without sin, but none without suffering"
- We need to expect trials, conflict and suffering as a part of our faith
 - It is part of it so we need to prepare for it
 - Acts 14:22 Phil. 1:29 1 Thess. 3:3 2 Tim. 3:12
 - 1 Peter 4:12-13 - don't be surprised we are just participating in Christs suffering
 - I am concerned about widespread disillusionment that could arise within the church
- Jesus was reviled, mocked and insulted
 - They called our Master a devil "Beelzebub " we will get publicly insulted as well
 - 1 Peter 2:23 1 Peter 4:14 (role play scenarios to help prepare)
- Throughout church history I has not been uncommon for Christians to be mistreated
 - John Bunyan - imprisoned for 12 years for preaching without a license (not sanctioned)
 - 244 year blip on history that has religious liberty
 - We are blessed with this freedom and that is why people want to come here
 - Just because that is how it has been doesn't mean that it is how it will always be
- Blessed are the persecuted
 - Heb. 10:35 Matt. 5:10-11
 - Matt. 5:12-16 the doors to the lighthouse shouldn't be shut
 - Take the salt out of society and it rots fast
- Jesus promises trouble in this life but triumph in eternal life -
 - Lets prepare for both
 - Be light in society with our eye on eternity Heb. 10:34