

Being A Disciple

“And be not fashioned according to this world” (Romans 12:2).

When we read this passage, we are brought to the realization that changes must be made if we are to be found acceptable to God. Thus, “be not fashioned according to this world.”

Conforming to the world is to make friendship with the world. James said, “know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?” (James 4:4).

Jesus once told his brethren in the flesh, “The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that its works are evil” (John 7:7). This hatred of the world, toward the Lord, would extend through his apostles, as Jesus said concerning them, “I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world” (John 17:14). The reason the world hated the Lord and his apostles was due to the fact that “the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reprov’d” (John 3:19-20).

Jesus said, “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his teacher, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household” (Matthew 10:24-25). Just as the world hated Jesus and his apostles, so we also understand that “all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12).

Not being “fashioned according to this world” ushers in persecution: evil people do not like the light of the gospel to shine upon their lives, “lest his works should be reprov’d.”

The principle of persecution was not only seen in how the prophets of God were treated, but it was also a part of the message of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul said to the Thessalonians, “For verily, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction; even as it came to pass, and ye know” (1 Thessalonians 3:4).

For those who do not conform to this world, persecution will follow, but to this, Jesus says, “What I tell you in the darkness, speak ye in the light; and what ye hear in the ear, proclaim upon the house-tops. And be not afraid of

them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven. Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward” (Matthew 10:27-42).

Remember the words of the Lord, saying, “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets” (Luke 6:26).