



THE CHURCH AT ELLERSLIE

SUNDAY SERMON NOTES

ERIC LUDY

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THE GREAT CHASE

A Study in the Role of Persecution in the Building of the Church



Diō - (primary verb) to flee, to chase or to be chased after

Diōkō - (verb) To run or flee, to press forward, to energetically exert in pursuit of an objective, to drive fiercely towards a goal, to be chased, to be harassed, to be hounded, to be persecuted

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (diōkō).

2 Timothy 3:12

Diōgmos - (noun) Persecution (aka - The Great Chase)

And at that time there was **a great persecution** against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation over him. ³ As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison. ⁴ **Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.**

Acts 8:1-4

The Amazing Effects of the Chase

1. The Great Chase
2. The Scattering, The Positioning
3. The Witness
4. The Harvest

And at that time there was a **great persecution** against the church which was at Jerusalem; **and they were all scattered abroad** throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria . . . **Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.**

Acts 8:1-4

The Principle:

- The Enemy chases and God leverages the chase to accomplish His ends
- The Enemy chases, God's people run and providentially scatter into position, and then become unstoppable and undeniable messengers of Truth in their strategic God-assigned positions

. . . you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses (martyrs) to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Acts 1:8

So I do not run aimlessly (with uncertainty); I do not box as one beating the air.

1 Corinthians 9:26

Key Idea

When the chase comes, I don't just run with uncertainty, not realizing that this chase has purpose and meaning. I know that God is allowing this chase to direct me perfectly into position that my witness may have full effect for His Kingdom and His glory!

Chasing Paul

But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel . . .

Philippians 1:12-14

What Happened to Him?

From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have

been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness . . .

2 Corinthians 11:24-27

What Were the Effects of this Chase?

A certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith said:

Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands:

Acts 19:26

The Marks of True Discipleship

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall *(be vigorously chased, pursued with evil venom, and harassed with earthly sufferings)*.

2 Timothy 3:12

I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

Galatians 6:17

Introducing the Fellowship of the Burning Heart

The Mark Bearers

How Will You Recognize Those of the Burning Heart?

30 Defining Attributes of those who bear the marks

1. They are those who are armed with the same mind as Christ was armed - prepared to suffer in the Body (1 Peter 4:1)
2. They are those who do not consider it strange to encounter fiery trials (1 Peter 4:12)
3. They are those who rejoice for the privilege of sharing in Christ's sufferings (1 Peter 4:13)
4. They are those who are unashamed of the fact that they suffer for righteousness (1 Peter 4:16)

5. They are those who consider it the highest privilege to fill up in their bodies what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body (Colossians 1:24)
6. They are those who are immovable and undaunted in affliction, for they know that they are commissioned, even appointed, to suffering, affliction, and tribulation. (1 Thessalonians 3:2-4,12)
7. They are those who are troubled on every side, yet do not get distressed; those who are perplexed, but do not despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. (2 Corinthians 4:8-9)
8. They are those who are always bearing about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in their body. (2 Corinthians 4:10)
9. They are those who yearn to share in the fellowship of His sufferings, and desire to be conformed to His death. (Philippians 3:10)
10. They are those who are not ashamed of the testimony of Jesus Christ, but are partakers of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God. (2 Timothy 1:8)
11. They are those who know that all things (whether it be *tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, or any other affliction*) work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)
12. They are those who accept with joy the fact that for Christ's sake they are killed all the day long; accounted as sheep for the slaughter. (Romans 8:35-36)
13. They are those who know that all afflictions and all trials shall turn to their salvation through prayer and through the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:19)
14. They are those who are utterly confident that they shall not be ashamed for the confidence they have placed in Jesus Christ, and whether it's by life or by death, Christ shall be magnified in their body. (Philippians 1:20)
15. They are those who know that to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (Philippians 1:21)
16. They are those who are gladly spent for the glory of God, and faint not through the difficult trials, imprisonments, and the many afflictions. (2 Corinthians 4:15-16)
17. They are those who are confident that as suffering and afflictions tear down and decompose their outward body, their inward man is renewed day by day. (2 Corinthians 4:16)
18. They are those who know that their current afflictions, work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. (2 Corinthians 4:17)
19. They are those who know that if their earthly house (their body) were dissolved, they have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2 Corinthians 5:1)

20. They are those who will gladly spend their bodies and spill their blood because of love for Jesus Christ and for His Body, the church. (2 Corinthians 12:15)
21. They are those who rejoice and are exceeding glad when they are reviled, persecuted, and all manner of evil is spoken against them falsely for the sake of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 5:11-12)
22. They are those who rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. (Acts 5:41)
23. They are those who are exceeding joyful in all their tribulation. (2 Corinthians 7:4)
24. They are those who consider it pure joy when they face trials of many kinds. (James 1:2)
25. They are those who know that where the sufferings of Christ abound, so the consolation, comfort, and satisfaction of Christ abounds. (2 Corinthians 1:5)
26. They are those whose hope is steadfast and whose endurance is strong though they be pressed out of measure, above their human strength to handle, in so much that they despair even of life. (2 Corinthians 1:6-8)
27. They are those whose boast is in their Christ, His sufferings, and the fact that they are privileged to share in the fellowship of those sufferings - in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths often. with scourging, stoning, stripes, beatings, shipwrecks, perils, weariness, painfulness, watchings, hunger, thirst, fastings, cold and nakedness. (2 Corinthians 11:23-27)
28. They are those who endure all things for Jesus Christ and for the sake of the elect. (2 Timothy 2:9-10)
29. They are those who do not consider the sufferings of this present time as worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in them. (Romans 8:18)
30. They are those who know it was fitting for Jesus to become perfect through suffering, and it is also fitting for them to be perfected in the same manner. (Hebrews 2:10)

The Pattern of the Burning Heart

23 of the 30 above descriptions were given by Paul the Apostle

The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you (Philippians 4:9) . . . Therefore I urge you, imitate me (1 Corinthians 4:16) . . . Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. (Philippians 3:17) . . . Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Hebrews 2:10

That I may know . . . the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to His death . . .

Philippians 3:10

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.

1 Peter 4:1

Changing our Attitude Towards “The Chase”

Rejoice always (*even while being chased*).

Pray without ceasing (*even for those chasing you*).

In every thing give thanks (*even for the privilege of being chased*):

for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. **Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy:** for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

Luke 6:22-23

Adopting the Ancient Attitude of Leaping

We are grieved by many trials . . . *and yet* . . . We greatly rejoice, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory (1 Peter 1:6-8)

We are reviled, persecuted, and falsely accused . . . *and yet* . . . Blessed are we; let us rejoice and be exceeding glad (Matthew 5:11-12)

We are partakers of Christ's sufferings . . . *and yet* . . . we may be glad with exceeding joy
(1 Peter 4:12-13)

We enduring tribulations . . . *and yet* . . . we are exceeding joyful (2 Corinthians 7:4)

We face trials and testings . . . *and yet* . . . we count it all joy (James 1:2-4)

How Can We Leap At Such a Time?

Because we see what others do not see

The Joy Set Before Us

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, ²Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Hebrews 12:1-3

What Do You Want to Grow up to Be?

Diakonos - The deacons, the persecuted, the (errand) runners of the Church; the ones that risk their lives to carry the message; the chased; those that find supreme delight in the grand adventure of being chased