

Crisis at the Close 4 of 6

The Trials

#0364

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1961

Jesus suffered alone, and we're to follow Him wherever He goes. Do you think that we will be called upon to suffer alone?

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously” 1 Peter 2:21–23.

We want to study the trials of Jesus, for He had quite a number, as we shall see. We want to study, if we can, something of the reasons for those repeated trials before the tribunes of earth. And we want to note the parallel in the coming crisis of the remnant church. For like Jesus, we too will be seized by angry mobs. Like Jesus, we shall suffer the results of the combination of church and state uniting to inflict persecution. And we shall need to have very clear in our minds the answer to this question: “Why does God permit it all? Why would God allow human beings to torture His children? Why would He allow them to be stretched on the rack or burned at the stake? Why would He permit them to be insulted and abused, tortured in every way that men and devils can invent?” It's very evident that He permitted all that men and devils could think of back there in Gethsemane, in the judgment hall, and Calvary. Why will God permit that, and why will He permit it again as the remnant come to their tests?

Doubtless, there are a number of reasons, friends. The reason I would have you think of especially tonight is this: to make the demonstration. To make the demonstration. As far as the death of Jesus is concerned, there are many ways in which Christ might have died. He might have died right there in Gethsemane. He nearly died under the weight of the sins of the world. He might have been executed by the mob, or He might have been led at once to the place of execution and crucified through quick action. But there was a *reason* for all the delays and experiences—there was a demonstration to be made. That's what this text says.

And the text indicates that you and I are called to a similar experience. What is it that God wants to demonstrate? He wants to demonstrate that divine love can be revealed in human flesh, forgiving its enemies and praying for its persecutors. He wants to reveal this, and that's more than work of a moment, my friends.

Let me put it very simply: how long can you hold out? Did you ever hear a person relating some experience and say, "I stood it as long as I could." Yes, we've heard that expression. Perhaps we've used it. We will need to get that kind of thinking out of our minds. We'll need to get all such thoughts banished. Concerning those who follow the Lamb in this closing hour, it is written, "Here is the *patience* of the saints..." Revelation 14:12. As another translation puts it, "Here is an opportunity for *endurance* on the part of God's people." And certainly, it will be an opportunity for endurance. And if you and I are ready as Jesus was ready, we will be able to give the same demonstration that He gave.

I'd like to have us note briefly, the experiences that Jesus went through from His midnight seizure in Gethsemane up until He was being sent to Calvary in the early hours of the next morning.

Do you know how many times Jesus was arraigned before earthly tribunals during those hours? Seven times: once before Ananias, once before Caiaphas, twice before the Sanhedrin, then before Pilate, and before Herod, and back again to Pilate. That makes seven times. Seven times He faced His accusers and persecutors. And in the intervals between these public arraignments, He was subjected to insult, abuse, and torture. Twice the terrible scourge was laid across His back, lash after lash cutting the flesh to the bones. The Roman soldiers mocked Him and arrayed Him in a purple robe, crowned Him with a wreath of thorns, and mockingly bowed before Him as if He were a king. The ignorant rabble, the rude mob, insulted Him in every way.

There's a text in Isaiah that gives us a glimpse of some of the suffering of Jesus. I'd like to have you think of it, friends. It's interesting how there're some things in the life of Jesus that are more definitely pictured in the Old Testament than they are in the New Testament. Here's a detail:

"I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting" Isaiah 50:6.

They jerked the hair right off that dear face and spat in His face. Rude, full of the spirit of the Devil. And while Jesus was revealing God-like patience and forgiving love, the Devil was giving through his servants the supreme demonstration of the cruelty and malignity of sin. It will be done again. And I want to say to you that Satan is studying your character and taking notes on what he finds. He is studying to find the particular thing that will make you lose your patience, that will make you lose your temper. With some, it's torture; with others, it's ridicule; with others, it's something else. Whatever it is, Satan is finding it out. He's laying his plans. And we ought to be wise enough to study our weak points as the Devil studies them. Then get busy with Jesus and make our weak points our strong points, so when the Devil finally comes, he will view us with amazement because we're a fortress impregnable to all his efforts.

That's the way it was with Jesus. You remember how the Savior put it, "...The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me" (John 14:30). There was in Him nothing that responded to Satan's temptations. And if you and I will get into the experience with God that Heaven wants us to have, we can come up to our crisis hour and give the demonstration that God wants us to give. I read:

"Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself: 'The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.' John 14:30... This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble" *Great Controversy*, page 623.

I want to stand, don't you? I want to get all the irritation and all the impatience out of me. I want to be able to meet the mob and give the exhibition that Jesus did. Don't you?

We've already been studying that Jesus came from prayer to meet them. We need to know our Father as He knew His Father. Then we will be able to say, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Christ knew as He faced those persecutors that His Father would not let one single blow, one single insulting remark, without first weighing it to see whether it would be good of the plan of salvation—for the salvation of souls. That was why Jesus rested in His Father's arms. All through that disgraceful farce of a trial, as hour after hour of torture went on, He knew that His Father was managing things. He didn't try to interfere. He didn't try to defend Himself. He didn't get angry; neither did He get discouraged. He didn't wilt. He did not become cowed.

You know today (I've thought about it) different camps of this world are practicing on one another. Atheistic communism and Roman Catholicism are engaged in a great world duel. And there are all kinds of effort made to fight each other and deal with each other.

One of the techniques that has been developed is what is called brainwashing. One of the great cardinals of the Catholic Church was taken by the communists, and was subjected for quite a long time to certain procedures that finally proceeded to wilt him. It's going to be a great surprise as the powers of this world, led by the Devil, find some people that no amount of torture, physical, mental, or spiritual can cause them to wilt. *It'll* take a miracle of God because the torturers of this age will have at their hand not only all the weapons of the past, but many new weapons—chemical weapons, drug weapons, physiological weapons, and all sorts of things that we know little of.

Thank God, friends, we don't need to know all about it. But there's one thing we need to know. We find it in Daniel 11. It tells us the secret of the success of the Waldenses and others in the Dark Ages who gave their witness for God in those days of bloody persecution. And it will be true again for those who stand for God in this last crisis hour.

Daniel the 11th chapter and the 32nd verse is speaking of the time of persecution. You'll notice the 33rd verse says:

“...They shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, [many] days” Daniel 11:33.

Now in that time of persecution, the prophecy was:

“...But the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits” Daniel 11:32.

What is the secret of strength? Knowing our God. Jesus knew His Father. So whether He was meeting the rough rabble, the cunning priests, the vacillating Pilate, the cruel Herod, or those rough soldiers in their work of torture and execution, to them all He revealed God in the flesh. And that great mystery of Godliness is to be demonstrated again in the remnant. God is to have here on earth a whole group of people, thousands of them, a little flock compared to the millions of this world, but enough to make a *grand* demonstration that there is power in Jesus to make a man loving and meek and patient under the most awful circumstances.

Notice what Jesus said to His disciples:

“Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves” Luke 10:3.

Jesus was the Lamb. “Behold the Lamb of God.” So He was there before His persecutors. And so it was prophesied of Him:

“...He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth” Isaiah 53:7.

Can you do that, friends? There are some things, at times, harder to bear than the rude blow of the rough mob. To have people lie about you may be harder than having them hit you in the face. Jesus had all that. False witnesses were testifying against Him before the Sanhedrin and before the court of Pilate. But like a lamb, like a sheep, He was dumb. Not through cowardice, but in calm courage.

I will have to admit that I don't have anything like that naturally. What about you? But I thank God that He has promised to get us ready for those experiences if we let

Him get us ready, friends. And I have found here, in this little book *Historical Sketches*, a most interesting statement as to how God is getting us ready for those martyr days ahead. And you will be interested to know that these words that I'm about to read were spoken by Sister White in the valley of the Waldenses. Over there amid those towering peaks of the Alps where the martyrs for God had laid down their lives, she spoke these words:

“God does not give us the spirit of the martyrs today, for we have not come to the point of martyrdom. He is now testing us by smaller trials and crosses. And at times when it seems that the billows of temptation will go over our heads, let us remember that the eye of God is watching over us, and let us be willing to endure all the trials he sees fit to send” *Historical Sketches*, page 233.

You see, dear friends. Children can learn arithmetic with pennies just as well as they can with dollar bills, can't they? It's the same principle. And you and I can learn to be patient and rely on God with these little trials and these petty difficulties and these tiny irritations that we have from day-to-day. We can learn to depend on Jesus and to reveal His love, can't we? And if we'll learn it with pennies, God will help us carry it out with tens and hundreds and thousands of dollars. I mean that the terrible trials that are ahead *can* be met and *will* be met with the same grace that sustains us now in these little difficulties of daily life.

Do you see how important that makes the daily life? Do you see how important it makes it for us to gain the victory in the daily life? Yes. For if we fail now, what will we do then? As God said through Jeremiah, “If you have run with the footmen and they have wearied you, what will you do when you must contend with horses?” (See Jeremiah 12:5.) But if we'll be willing to run with the footmen now, God will develop us to the place where we can contend with the horses when that time comes.

I want to stress the point, friends, that we're going to be brought before the tribunals as Jesus was. I want to read a statement from the *Review and Herald*:

“It does not seem possible to us now that any should have to stand alone; but if God has ever spoken by me, the time will come when we shall be brought before councils and before thousands for His name's sake, and each one will have to give the reason of his faith. Then will come the severest criticism upon every position that has been taken for the truth” *Review and Herald*, December 18, 1888.

You notice how emphatic she makes it: “If God has ever spoken by me, the time will come when we shall be brought before councils and before thousands for His name's sake, and each one will have to give a reason of his faith.” Here's another interesting statement:

“The members of the church will individually be tested and proved. They will be placed in circumstances where they will be forced to bear witness for the truth. Many will be called to speak before councils and in courts of justice, perhaps separately and alone” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 463.

If you and I believe this, what will we do? We'll do what Joseph did down in Egypt when he knew his family was coming. He stored up. And we should be storing up the Bible in our minds and hearts now because I don't know that they will guarantee to furnish us Bibles when they put us in the dungeon. It'll be a wonderful thing if we can draw on the Word in our minds, won't it? Not only just memorize the Word, that's part of it, but ask God to so teach us its meaning that when the time comes that we're examined, His Spirit will be able to bring to our remembrance the truths and answer the questions that are given us. And if we are faithful in that, do you know what's going to happen? Why, some of the great men of the earth are going to step out and take their stand right at that time. Won't that be a wonderful thing? Yes. You'll find this in *Great Controversy*, speaking of this time of test when we're brought before the courts:

“As the movement for Sunday enforcement becomes more bold and decided, the law will be invoked against commandment keepers. They will be threatened with fines and imprisonment... Those who are arraigned before the courts make a strong vindication of the truth, and some who hear them are led to take their stand to keep all the commandments of God. Thus light will be brought before thousands who otherwise would know nothing of these truths” *Great Controversy*, page 607.

I think that's wonderful, don't you? And on page 611 it says:

“When the final warning shall be given, it will arrest the attention of these leading men through whom the Lord is now working, and some of them will accept it, and will stand with the people of God through the time of trouble” *Ibid.*, page 611.

Won't it be wonderful to see something like that? And God's going to use, perhaps, some humble witness that's called before the court that'll speak the word that will send conviction to some judge, some attorney, some legislature, some governor or senator, or somebody, and the seed that has been sown in his heart long before, perhaps through our literature or through some radio or television program, is caused to spring up in that crisis hour through the ministration of the Holy Spirit, and he steps out and says, "This is the truth, and I'm going to accept it."

But you see that it depends upon God's people making the demonstration, giving the evidence of loyalty and love: loyalty to God, love for His law, and love for people,

even their worst enemies. Never must there be an angry word, never a sarcastic look, never taking advantage of one's opponents by some twist of a word, but a sweet, calm, confident presentation of Christ's truth. I repeat, we need to be practicing. And God is furnishing us with the material to practice on. That's what the experiences of daily life are for.

Now, I come to another very important part of this, dear friends. I think of our children—our boys and girls, our young people. Will they have a part in this, or will it just be for the older ones? Yes, everyone is going to be tested. Everyone. I want to read a statement concerning this matter:

“The principles necessary for our youth to cultivate must be kept before them in their daily education, that when the decree shall go forth requiring all to worship the beast and his image, they may make the right decisions, and have strength to declare, without wavering... Those who waver now and are tempted to follow in the wake of apostates who have departed from the faith, ‘giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils,’ will surely be found on the side of those who make void the law of God, unless they repent and plant their feet firmly upon the faith once delivered to the saints” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 525.

Have we come to an age when youth is noticed for its wavering more than its stability? Are there many who have the idea that young people have to come to a certain age and then they'll settle down and become stable? But the Bible does not teach that that is the experience that our young people are to have.

Joseph was only 17 when he met the great crisis of his life, and he stood firm for God. Daniel was only 18 when he was ushered into the court of Babylon with all its temptations, and made those decisions that established him forever as a witness for the King of kings. Jesus was only 12 when, in the temple at Jerusalem, He made it evident that there was just one motive that moved Him, and that was to be about His Father's business. So dear friends, as parents and teachers, we're to help our children get ready for what's ahead.

I want to read this challenge to parents from the *Review and Herald*:

“Parents, ask yourselves the solemn question, ‘Have we educated our children to yield to parental authority, and thus train them to obey God, to love Him, to hold His law as the supreme guide of conduct and life? ...Believing parents, your children will have to fight decisive battles for the Lord in the day of conflict...’” *Review and Herald*, April 23, 1889.

And then comes this thought-provoking sentence:

“The tender mercies of this power will be displayed in prison cells and dungeons” *Ibid.*

What did it say just before? Oh, the questions were raised, "Parents, are you teaching your children to be obedient to you, and thus teaching them to be obedient to God?" Do you know it's very rare today to find an obedient child? The real test of any obedience is when the child is told to do something that he would not *want* to do. As long as the thing he is told is something he wants to do, there's no test as to whether he is obedient or not, is it? No.

Children, are we learning to obey father and mother and teacher? Are we learning in the home and in the school and in the institution to be obedient to those who God has placed over us? This is *vital*. And I want to say to you, friends: It doesn't make any difference what modern psychology or any other psychology says. *All* ideas that would set aside the necessity of obedience have their origin in that mastermind that persuaded one-third of the angels of Heaven that obedience to law was not necessary for angels. And he is still spreading those theories that children and older ones should more or less be allowed to make their own decisions and choose their own ways.

Oh friends, that we may learn *God's* way in this vital subject, for as this says, our children must fight decisive battles for the Lord in the day of conflict. It was because Joseph had learned obedience with his father in the tents of Canaan that he was prepared to stand *alone* for God amid the vice and under the terrible dungeon in Egypt. It was because Daniel had learned obedience in his home in Judea that he was prepared to stand for God amid all the vices and luxuries, and also the threat of possibly losing his life. Amid all those problems and experiences, he was true because he had learned obedience. And Jesus is looking for some children and young people today who, like Him, will learn *obedience*. Jesus, at the age of 12, recognized His Sonship to His Father, but immediately it is added:

“And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them” Luke 2:51.

All through His teens and twenties Jesus gave an exhibition of loving obedience to those who in God's providence were over Him. So we have those lessons to learn today. And God is looking for those who will learn the lessons and learn them fast. As the angel said to the Lord's messenger, "...Step fast." (See Early Writings, page 67.)

A few years ago, in one of the largest countries in this world, *suddenly* a change in the political situation brought a great change for our church and our people. Institutions that for decades had stood as memorials for God were infiltrated by those who sympathies were far from being with the truth. Even some leaders went the way of the popular movement. Some stood true and were put in prison. Some have suffered even unto death. But friends, there's one thing that happened over there that especially impressed me. And that is how that even children seemed to be on fire either for God or for the opposition. In that part of the world field, some of the most wonderful things

for God that have been done in recent years have been done by young men and women without pay or without recognition, simply because they were on fire for God.

One of the mobs that was led from one of our institutions to another to carry on a work of misrepresentation and opposition was led by just a young student. And do you know that in one tribe, when one of our doctors and his wife, native people, were put on trial and announced as enemies of the people and as agents of western imperialism, their own little children, about 10 or 12 years old, (seems impossible to believe it, but this is what happened), there in that great audience, those children got up and in a frenzy denounced their own parents, and said that those parents were worthy to die?

I want to say to you, dear children, we are rapidly coming to an hour when in the closing days of the harvest time, every plant will go to seed. Children in their teens will be manifesting characters that we usually think about with ages much older. Even today, children are becoming *old* in sin at an early age. And God expects there to be some youthful Samuel and some useful Johns today just as there are these youthful fanatics urged on by the frenzy of the Devil. It can be done, my friends. As the spirit of Satan can grip the hearts of children and cause them to stand up and witness against their parents, crying for their blood as the mob cried for the blood of Jesus, so the Spirit of God, on the other hand, can and will come upon children, and cause them to be witnesses for the King of kings.

Dear parents, you and I have much to say as to which way our children will go. While the children themselves must choose, believe me, unless they are trained to love obedience and to obey because they love, unless the parents give an exhibition of love and firmness so blended together that there's no way to separate them, most of them will go down the wrong road. So as we look into the coming crisis and as we think of ourselves and our children being brought before the tribunals of earth and also facing these angry mobs, I feel moved to make a plea that in our homes we learn and teach the lessons of loving obedience. What do you say?

Shall we do it, friends? Oh, that we may be able to say,

“Behold, I and the children whom God hath given
me are for signs and wonders in Israel...” Isaiah 8:18.

This is the statement that some parents will be able to make in this last generation. With the voices of spiritualism croaking and mumbling about us, God is calling for parents and children who will be the light of the world in this crisis hour.

As we face this picture that we have drawn from the Word of God and the testimonies of His Spirit, I wonder if there is a parent here that senses a great need that God will help you to learn and teach these lessons, and make you His agent to prepare your children, and you'd like to seek the Lord in a special way. If the Lord lays that

burden on your heart, and you feel a great sense of need in this matter tonight, seek the Lord for an experience that will help you to get your children ready in this crisis hour.

Children, if you want to dedicate your life to learn these lessons along with your parents, if you want to say to Jesus, "Yes, Jesus, I want to learn loving obedience," come little brother and little sister and seek the Lord with all your heart. I trust that you'll let God do thorough work in your hearts. Put away every spirit of rebellion or of selfish desire to have your own way. Let your parents know that you're going to try to help them in this battle against the rebellious spirit in this wicked age. Jesus learned obedience by the things which He suffered. We must learn obedience today.

This is a time for prayer, friends. It's the week of prayer. And we need help from God and God's promised to give it to us, hasn't He friends? And when God's people seek Him in this way with all the heart, we have a right to expect that right here tonight, we're going to get special help from Jesus. Is that right? His promises are big.

[Prayer from selected brothers in audience. After prayer, audience sings "I Will Follow Thee My Savior."]

Now, I'd like to make a little suggestion as we close this meeting. I'd like to suggest that between now and the time we come back for the vesper service Friday evening, that every home that's represented here have a special little time and get together and talk over and prayer over what we've been going through tonight. If you'd like to do that, friends, God will bless. Parents, get your little families together; talk over what we've studied tonight and pray together about it. Let the father pray, and the mother pray, and the children pray. Pray with sorrow for past mistakes, but pray with faith that God will forgive the past.

Joel says it's time to blow the trumpet and gather the people, and weep between the porch and the altar. And the children are to be gathered along with the fathers and mothers as we seek a preparation for the day of God.

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