

Matthew 24:9-13
Enduring Tribulation

Grim developments ...

I. Anticipation

A. Persecution

B. Apostasy

II. Fulfillment

A. Dreadful Days

B. Through the Ages

III. Endurance

A. Perspective

B. Perseverance

... glorious advances.

Children, Listen ...

1. What does Jesus tell His followers will happen to them?
2. What does He say will happen to some people who say they are Christians?
3. Will people ever be able to stop the preaching of the Gospel and to destroy the church. If not, why not?
4. What can God's people do to make themselves strong in faith and ready for days of trouble?

No Surprise

Jesus continues to alert his original followers to the troubles and terrors that are near on the horizon. He has already informed them that wars, earthquakes and famines will continue before the end comes. In today's passage He adds more grim news – there will be severe persecution and great apostasy. Such things will all take place before the destruction of the Temple referred to at the beginning of the discourse. Horrific as what they have heard is, and alarming as what Jesus says in upcoming passages is, preaching of the Gospel will endure, many will persevere in the faith, and God's glorious Kingdom will continue to advance despite the devastation and destruction that lies ahead. The trials and tribulations the first Christians faced did not cease with the sacking of Jerusalem. Through the years the saints of God have been subjected not only to the disasters that effect mankind in general, but they have been and continue to be objects of persecution for the sake of Christ. Sadly, it is also true that many have succumbed to the pressures of the world and have forsaken the faith. Nonetheless, God's Word endures and His Kingdom continues to grow despite pressure from a fallen world and trouble and weakness in the professing church. In light of this it is fair to ask ourselves: "how would I endure under such dramatic trials that Jesus describes?" Brothers and sisters, we need to be ever ready for pressures pulling at our faith by standing firm on the foundation of our faith with our eyes always fixed on Jesus who has gone before us. *Oh, and don't be surprised if or when such trials come.*

John 15:18 "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you."

1 John 3:13 Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.

2 Timothy 3:12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

For more on the history of the persecuted church, Foxes Book of Martyrs is a great resource. To keep updated on more current concerns follow Voice of the Martyrs. To strengthen yourself in days of peace and for days of trouble vigorously pursue the means of grace God provides.